

Protecting the lives, safety, property, & environment of all persons in the community & surrounding areas we serve

HOT TOPICS

REMINDER: Backyard burning seasons ends on June 15

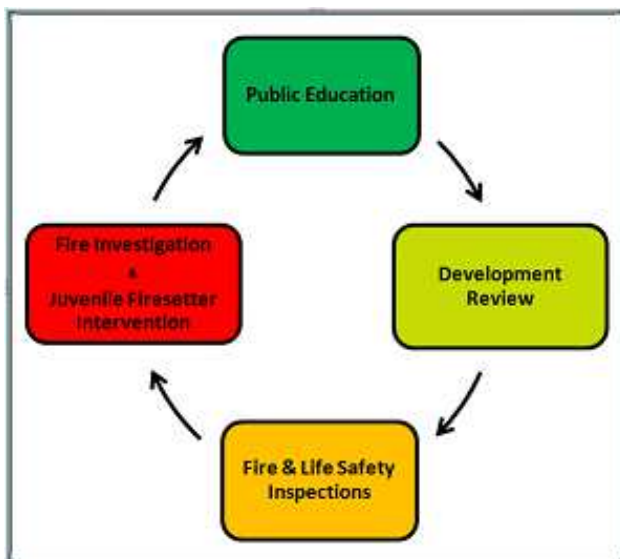
NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR DISTRICT RESIDENTS

Visit our website at <http://www.corvallisrfd.com>

The Cycle of Fire Prevention

Fire Prevention is a coordinated self-assessing Community Risk Reduction tool. Acting as its proxy, the Corvallis Fire Department is mandated by the Oregon State Fire Marshal to implement the four cyclical legs of fire prevention: Public Education, Development Review, Fire and Life Safety Inspections, and Fire Investigation (including Juvenile Firesetter Intervention).

These four proactive directives overlap seamlessly with fire operations and emergency response in fulfilling the mission of the fire department.



Public Education

The target audience of a Public Education message depends on the perceived risk to the community, the message to be delivered, and the medium of the delivery. The Fire Prevention Division is the “Tip of the Arrow” in the fire department:

The Fire Prevention Division is the first to contact the target audience through public education messages, presentations, and programs with the goal of reducing or eliminating the incidence of injury, death, and property loss due to fire. The target audience can range



from preschool through seniors; and, like an arrow, these messages can be either general or very precise, based on the perceived risk to the community. Public Education messages are often crafted in response to, or during post-analysis of, a specific incident.

Development Review

Development review makes up the bulk of the arrowhead. The Fire Prevention Division participates in the Development Review process ensuring that changes to the City’s infrastructure can support the fire departments mission. This includes assessing access and available water supply for the suppression of fires

and to ensure structural compliance with the requirements in the Oregon Fire Code (OFC). Often there are competing interests during the development review process that can present unintended consequences to emergency response.

These livability issues can include conflicting provisions within the Land Development Codes (LDC) or Building Codes that prescribe local regulation that



are in direct opposition to the OFC.

Obstructions to fire department access can include street geometry, bridges, traffic calming devices, street trees, and overhead power lines.

Any of these

obstructions can have an adverse affect on the ability of the fire department vehicles to arrive in a timely manner and operate safely at an emergency scene.

Fire & Life Safety Inspections

Fire and Life Safety Inspections connect the arrowhead to the shaft. After construction is complete the Fire Department is tasked with ensuring that fire protection systems are maintained and that businesses are operated safely. This is accomplished through regularly scheduled Fire and Life Safety Inspections (FLSI) during normal operating hours. These FLSI may be conducted by the Fire Prevention Division or by firefighters during their normal work shift.



Regular inspections offer a free risk management consultation for a business owner/manager that is focused on making a profit. From the perspective of the fire inspector FLSI are considered an educational opportunity rather than a punitive practice. In addition to ensuring that required fire protection systems are maintained, a fire inspector is looking for:

- known contributing causes of fire;
- obstructions to occupant egress; and
- hazardous conditions that would put the occupants' or responding firefighters' safety at undue risk.

By contrasting the historic local fire loss against the national model, there is ample evidence that over 50 years of proactive FLSI in Corvallis have saved the community billions of dollars in fire loss, have prevented countless injuries from fire, and have saved lives.

Fire Operations

Fire Operations makes up the shaft of the arrow and can be defined as our on-duty paid and volunteer staff, ready to respond to all hazards at a moment's notice twenty-four hours a day. Like the arrow, the shaft



makes up the mass in the fire department and consists of equipment resources, human resources, facilities, and training. Fire Operations is also the bulk of the fire department budget (roughly 85 percent), and Operations

personnel are always ready to respond to what might occur. Simply put, their mission is to prevent the problem from getting worse.

The Fire Prevention Division is tasked with the difficult mission of preventing the fire from occurring, and if a fire does occur, to reduce the resources necessary to mitigate it by preventing its extension to neighboring properties, compartments or structures. When properly executed, Fire Prevention facilitates an overall reduction in the cost of fire operations by eliminating, reducing, or mitigating, the incidence of fire prior to the firefighters' arrival on scene. During the development review process, care is taken to ensure firefighter safety enroute to an emergency and on scene.

Fire Investigation & Juvenile Firesetter Intervention

The Fire Prevention Division is tasked by the Oregon State Fire Marshal to determine the origin, cause, and responsibility of all fires that occur within the jurisdiction. This is the final phase of the Fire Prevention Division cycle; the quill of the arrow which provides stability and direction to the organization.

In the Corvallis Fire Department, every fire is thoroughly debriefed, including issues that involve access and water supply, fire protection systems, fire scene tactics, and firefighter safety. If juveniles are involved with the fire, they are evaluated by a certified interventionist to determine if they are candidates for participation in the Juvenile Firesetter Intervention program.

If executed properly, post-fire analysis, as part of a comprehensive Fire Investigation, can provide direction to the organization and will be the basis for future public education messages. Any infrastructure deficiencies identified in the post-fire debrief can be implemented into future development review processes. And, the results of the Fire Investigations are passed on to the fire inspectors to ensure that similar conditions are mitigated in comparable occupancies.



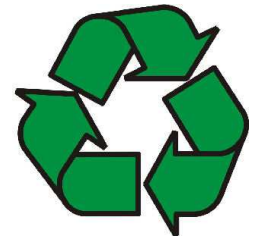
Once the cause of a fire has been determined, the prevention division compiles statistics which are used to analyze the fire problem within the community and contrast it to the state and national models. These fire and injury statistics are then used to further hone the public education messages specifically addressing the fire problem in our community; and the Cycle of Fire Prevention repeats itself.

YARD DEBRIS RECYCLING / PICK UP AND OPEN BURNING

In August of 2012, a resident of the rural district forwarded a comment to the board, stating that he had to burn his yard waste because the yard debris pickup area did not extend to his property on Crescent Valley Drive. He had tried to negotiate with Allied Waste Services (AWS) for an extension of this service to his property but was unsuccessful in his attempts. In September, he and one of the Corvallis Rural Fire Protection District (CRFPD) board members attended a monthly meeting of the Benton County Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) and introduced the

issue of potential fire danger for discussion. In that meeting, the CRFPD board member described the increased risks of forest fires from debris piles being burned outside the boundaries of yard debris pickup routes, with the goal of making yard debris pickup service available to people in the outlying areas. Some residents have been receiving this service for years while others have never had the option.

AWS wanted to accommodate the community with all of the services they offered and was willing to partner with CRFPD to make it happen. One of the ideas discussed was to create county / urban yard debris areas and included mapping out reasonably densely populated residential locations situated next to forests on existing recycling routes. Another alternative to curbside pickup included more free disposal days at the Adair process recovery site. A proposal was made to form a sub-group which included AWS staff, a representative from the CRFPD board, and one or more residents who had requested this service. AWS wanted some direction from the SWAC on what criteria should be considered when being asked to extend services. Some of the issues faced by AWS in providing new services included proximity to established routes, the travel distance between customers, access via well-maintained roads with an adequate turnaround radius, population density, and fairness. The CRFPD added the consideration of proximity to forested areas to mitigate fire danger.



Some of the options discussed included the frequency of pickup (weekly versus monthly), providing vouchers for those who take their own debris to Adair for drop off, providing a chipper for community use, and the number of pickup bins that might be required by county residents. In the



end, AWS decided to extend its yard debris pickup route to all of Crescent Valley Drive. It was a great insight from a concerned neighbor that helped the CRFPD board to reduce the potential for fire in the district. As you are aware, Republic Services now provides waste and recycling services in the Corvallis area and continues to pick up yard debris along all of Crescent Valley Drive.

For those who need or prefer to burn their dry yard debris, the fire department and CRFPD board ask that you use great care and caution. Every year the Fire Department, including Locke Station on Lewisburg Avenue, responds to open burns that were not properly managed or accidentally got out of control. These fires have consumed acreage, damaged structures, and even injured residents. Open burning also releases smoke and gases that are detrimental to the environment and can be annoying to neighbors.



There may be a cost associated with pick-up of yard debris if it is available in your area, but you must also consider the potential cost of a fire that may become uncontrolled. Residents may be charged for Fire Department services for fires requiring extinguishment due to a careless or inappropriate open burn. If you feel your property is configured safely to allow for a low-risk open burn, please remember these safety precautions and requirements:

- ✓ Ensure that you only burn on approved burn days AND that you obtain a permit from Oregon Department of Forestry, if the location of your property requires one. The burning advisory phone number is 541-766-697, and the message is updated by 8:15 each morning.
- ✓ Provide at least 50 feet of clearance between the burn pile and any structure or combustible vegetation such as trees or bushes. These clearances can be reduced if burning occurs in an approved container (reducing the clearance distance to 15 feet) or in a burn pile of three feet or less in

diameter (reducing the clearance distance to 25 feet).

- ✓ If you have a very large pile of debris, then create a much smaller burn pile several feet downwind from the debris pile, and feed the burn pile gradually.
- ✓ Ensure that there is an adequate water supply available at the burn site, capable of containing or extinguishing the burn pile if it starts to get out of control.
- ✓ Someone **MUST BE IN ATTENDANCE AT ALL TIMES** the fire is burning or smoldering.
- ✓ Never use gasoline or other flammable liquids to kindle a fire. Highly volatile material such as gasoline can create a dangerous explosion and cause serious injury.
- ✓ Call 9-1-1 immediately if the fire gets out of your control.
- ✓ Ensure the ground cover surrounding the burn site is rendered non-combustible either by thoroughly wetting or removing combustible vegetation.



It is also important to remember that residents are only allowed to burn dry yard debris and clippings. Yard debris burning does not include trash, construction debris, slash, and other land clearing debris. If in doubt, contact the Corvallis Fire Department at 541-766-6961 or, if applicable, the Oregon Department of Forestry at 541-929-3266.

Landslides in Oregon

Landslides are one of the most widespread and damaging natural hazards in Oregon and affect thousands of Oregonians every year.



Understanding landslide types, their triggers and warning signs, how you can help prevent landslides, and how to react when one happens go a long way toward reducing landslide risk. There are various common types of landslides:

- Slides
- Flows
- Spreads
- Falls
- Topples
- And combinations of these

A more detailed online fact sheet is available at <http://www.oregongeology.org/sub/publications/landslide-factsheet.pdf>.



Common landslide causes in Oregon include intense rainfall, rapid snow melt, freeze/thaw cycles, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and human-caused changes to the natural slope that concentrate water. Signs of potential problems include:

- structural deformation such as large foundation cracks
- misaligned doors and windows
- tilted floors
- sagging decks
- large, open cracks in driveways, curbs, and roads
- failing retaining walls and
- arc-shaped cracks in the ground

Common risk-reduction activities can include:

- minimizing irrigation on slopes
- ensuring that water and sewer lines do not leak
- avoiding removal of material from the base of slopes
- avoiding adding material or excess water to the top of slopes
- draining water from surface runoff, downspouts, and driveways well away from

slopes and into storm drains or natural drainages

- planting ground cover with deep roots on slopes
- building retaining walls at the base of slopes in debris/mud flow prone areas, in valley bottoms, or on fans at the mouths of canyons
- contacting qualified professionals to determine how to best build channels and/or deflection walls to direct the flow around buildings (while keeping your neighbors' risks in mind).

Additional information is available from **Nature of the Northwest Information Center** (<http://www.naturenw.org>) and **Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries** (<http://www.OregonGeology.org>).

Who Are Your Board Members, and When Do They Meet?

The Corvallis Rural Fire Protection District is headed by a five-member board elected at-large to the positions for a staggered four-year term. The Board generally meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month at the Locke Station. The meetings are open to the public, and we encourage you to come and learn more about your fire district. Your board members are:

Tom Nelson Tom.Nelson@corvallisrfd.com
Chair

Howard Jones Howard.Jones@corvallisrfd.com
Member at Large

George Mears George.Mears@corvallisrfd.com
Treasurer

Bob Conder Bob.Conder@corvallisrfd.com
Secretary

Dick Ragsdale Dick.Ragsdale@corvallisrfd.com
Member at Large

