

GREER RURAL FIRE DISTRICT

Community Newsletter
Volume 3, Issue 1—June 2019

LET'S HEAR IT FROM THE FIRE CHIEFS

We have a new Fire Chief in Orofino. He is also Greer's Fire Chief since we don't run our own station. Jon Hoyt, and his counterpart, Tony Christopherson from Weippe, joined the Board of Greer Fire District to discuss concerns and ideas.

Let's start with the greatest concern of all—the Grade itself. Jon and Tony set our expectations. This time last year I wrote that one of the most important things we needed to know about living here is that our nearest fire-fighting resources are at least 15 minutes away. **NEWS ALERT—make that 40 to 45 minutes** for those of us who live part-way up/down the Grade! Hauling thousands of gallons up the Grade, or steering it safely down, slows the response process immensely. We have little/ no hope of saving a home if we rely totally on Orofino and Weippe to make it safely to our aid.

Here is some advice from Jon:

"It takes everybody in the district to make it work - from keeping your property fire wise to helping your neighbors be fire wise. Always be thinking about what you can do to help your community make it through a bad fire season. Fire safety should be on everyone's mind all the time especially in a rural setting. If everyone is working on keeping a good defendable space around their home, the impact will be lower. Fire travels uphill quickly, so keeping the brush and trees cleared from around your home is like buying fire insurance. The smartest thing I've seen homeowners do is keep a defendable space around their home and have some water, hose, and a pump on hand. Finally, I think everyone understands that they live in an area where if things go wrong then it'll take some time for help to arrive. But if you are always thinking about the "what ifs" then you can protect yourself and your property until that help gets there. But if at anytime a fire is bigger then you think you can handle, just GET OUT! You can always rebuild a house but you can't replace a life!"

Bottom line – **first response is down to us** as homeowners! **Prevention is better than cure.** We can go it alone or we can combine as a community to improve our collective chances.

What should we prioritize doing to help our chances? **Come to our meeting on 6/29 to help decide!**



Living with the trees brings special challenges and responsibilities



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Fire Chief Insights.....	1
Activity report and plan	2
Get free help	2
Training offer	3
Meeting invitation/agenda	3

ABOUT GREER RURAL FIRE DISTRICT

COMMISSIONERS:

- Linda Beard
(208) 660-6261
- Bill Miller
(208) 816-1041
- Lynn Monger
(208) 476-4215

SECRETARY:

- Christine Betts
(208) 553-7365

TREASURER:

- Connie Miller
(208) 553-0484

Call any of us with your questions, concerns or ideas. If we don't know we will gladly direct you to someone who does.

We provide and support fire safety in our area by supporting the firefighters and supporting the community to be fire-wise and ready.

ACTIVITY SINCE LAST MTG

Supporting the firefighters – CPTPA, Orofino and Weippe FDs

- Paid OFD \$1,636 and WFD \$600
- Installed water tank in Greer
- Mapped 4 water resources available to fire fighters
- Met with Fire Chiefs from Orofino and Weippe
- Planned to install a second new water source - **to be discussed again after input from Fire Chiefs**
- Started investigation of what it will take to provide first-response for our district
- Contributed to county plans with requests for support

Supporting the community to be fire-wise and ready

- Updated database of the community
- Ham radio—trained 7 people
- Fire-wise discussion 6/29/2019
- Researched grant opportunities for future use

2019-20 ACTIVITY OPTIONS

Supporting the firefighters – CPTPA, Orofino and Weippe FDs

- Build plan to fund and create first-response resources within GRFD
- Increase funding for OFD and WFD after re-negotiation of Mutual Aid agreement
- Attend fire training??
 - Orofino Fire Academy—Spring;
 - Weippe train every 1st & 3rd week-ends
 - Orofino train every 1st and 3rd Mondays
- Other suggestions ??

Supporting the community to be fire-wise and ready

- Training ??
- Ham Radio??
- Phone Tree??
- Assessments Program??
- Other suggestions ??

PROPOSALS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION:

- Transfer all un-used funds to Building Fund this year and in all subsequent years until First Response project is complete
- Increase funding to Orofino and Weippe FD while we build our own capability

“It seems that fire prevention by most homeowners is not an urgent priority, UNTIL the wildfire is moving towards their property. By then it is too late.

It is also an annual chore, not just a one time thing.”

Ronald Dwyer, a resident on the Grade, believes in learning from past experiences and there is no doubt that the last few years of severe wildfire in California, Colorado, Washington, and even Kamiah are worth learning from. Whole communities have gone up in smoke in unprecedented incidents. Ron has 38 years experience fighting wildfire working for the US Forest Service. When he decided to build a home among the trees of Idaho, he did his research, including learning from the Rocky Mountain Research Station publications written about the 2002 Hayman fire in Colorado. Ron offered his help to review fellow resident’s properties last year - and got no takers..... Weippe Fire Chief has a particular interest in this activity too. **Is now the time for you to ask for help?** Let us know and we can put you in touch with Ron or Tony

SAVE THE DATE & HAVE YOUR SAY!

Fire Preparedness!

Learn about:

- Wildfire—why it is such a problem now
- Basics on home protection
- How to reduce your risk

Receive free publications and handouts

Greer Rural Fire District

Greer Centennial Park

Chat with and learn from **Bill Warren**, University of Idaho Extension Office

Bring a chair and writing materials

Saturday, June 29th, 2019

4:00 pm to 5:00 pm

NOTE: The above session will be cancelled if there is not enough interest. Please let your Commissioner know if you plan to attend - see front page for phone numbers.

Annual Budget Meeting

AGENDA

- Review and revise 2018/19 activity and expenditure
- Discuss priorities and plans
- Sign off on 2019/20 budget
- Plan to elect Commissioners

Meet your neighbors; learn how to get involved

Greer Rural Fire District

Greer Centennial Park

Share in the decision-making for Greer Rural Fire District for 2019/20

Your opinion counts!

Bring a chair, dish to share, and a beverage of your choice

Saturday, June 29th, 2019

5:00 pm

This is a significant year for deciding current and long-term priorities for the fire district. Your attendance can make a real difference to the value you get from your tax dollars.

Greer Rural Fire District
PO Box 708
Orofino
ID 83544

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