



# SKAGIT COUNTY

# FIRE DISTRICT 13

[www.skagitfire13.net](http://www.skagitfire13.net)

January 2025

## Mission Statement

*Skagit County Fire District 13 is devoted to protecting lives and property by providing professional emergency services to our community, neighbors and visitors. We train for the worst to give you the best.*

### Board of Commissioners

Chair, Bruce Shellhamer

Commissioner\_1@skagitfire13.net

Vice-Chair, John Doyle

Commissioner\_2@skagitfire13.net

Jeremy Wilbur

Commissioner\_3@skagitfire13.net

### Fire Chief

Wood Weiss

chief@skagitfire13.net

### Stations

Station Two (Main Station)

17433 Snee-Oosh Road

La Conner, WA 98257

Station One

8652 Stevenson Road

Anacortes, WA 98221

## Message from the Chief

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season filled with Joy and Peace. I know many of us struggle to fulfill our New Year's resolutions at this time of year but if one of your resolutions was to check and replace your smoke alarms then by golly, we can help you with that. In addition, if your resolution was to make your house more Firewise this year, we can help you with that this spring. If your resolution was to eat less chocolate cake, we can help with that also. Firefighters are always willing to help by eating more cake and cookies.

One of the subjects that I wanted to touch on in this newsletter is District 13's identity crisis. I have found by talking with patients and community members over the past year that there is a great deal of confusion over who we are. Let me start with who we are not, we are not the La Conner Fire Department. The La Conner Fire Department is a small municipal Volunteer Department, serving about 900 or so inhabitants who live in the town boundaries. Their Fire Hall is the one you pass by when you come into La Conner and is in front of the water treatment plant.

In contrast, Fire District 13 is a 24/7 hybrid (career and part-time) department serving over 7,000 people over a 71 square mile area. Our main station is on Snee-Oosh Road on the reservation. If you are in Shelter Bay, you are in District 13. If you are on the reservation, you are in District 13. If you are on farmland east of the channel or on Channel Drive, you are most probably in District 13's primary response area. We have a great relationship with the La Conner Fire Department and work with them all the time to help mitigate problems in and around the town. In addition, we are present at all La Conner Town medical calls to help with transport and treatment.

We are always here to serve this district and our neighboring communities when called upon. Thank you for your support. Please come and visit us at our Snee-Oosh station for a tour of our big red fire engines.

-Chief Woody

## GOOD MORNING DISTRICT 13!

Fire District 13 can help assist you in living independently with our no cost *Good Morning District 13* program. Through this service, we can communicate with you and check on your welfare daily.

### Who can use this program?

- Senior Citizens
- Persons with functional needs
- Residents who may have special needs
- Those that live alone
- Those that live with a spouse or partner that has special needs

### Programs available:

- Full time - contact made daily
- Part time - contact made weekly or can be customized according to your needs
- Short term - after a recent injury, surgery or change in medication needing temporary assistance

Our hope is that providing this service to our residents, their families can have the peace of mind that comes from knowing that someone is looking out for them. For more information or to join the program, please call (360)399-1027 and leave a message and we will contact you as soon as possible.

## SMOKE ALARMS

Fire District 13, with help from the American Red Cross, can come install a smoke alarm (including hearing impaired alarms) and customize a fire escape plan for your house at no charge.

- The smoke alarms we install are good for approximately 10 years.
- We can help replace 9-volt batteries when they need their yearly replacement.
- Hardwired smoke alarms that have battery back ups, should have their batteries replaced every year, or when they start to chirp.

If you'd like to schedule an install, please call 360-391-4554 to set up an appointment.



Congratulations to Firefighter/EMT Cole Mardesich for completing his rookie book and becoming a badged firefighter!

## FD13—CARES

With support from the Swinomish Tribal Community, the FD13 CARES team is here for you!

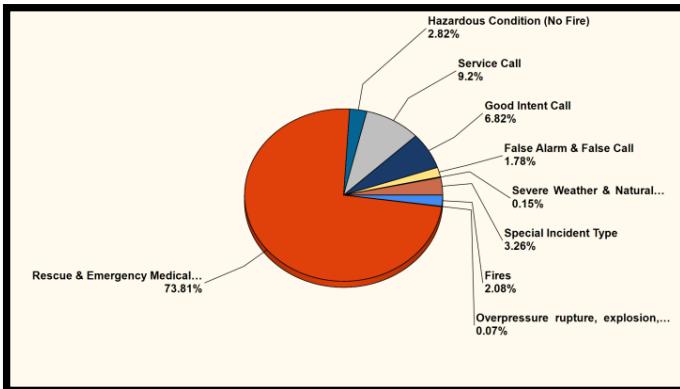
The CARES team can help you with:

- Mental Health & Substance Abuse
- Post Hospital Care
- Appointments and Medication Assistance
- Pre Hospital Assessments
- Elder Assistance and Resources
- Crisis Support
- Vital Assessments
- Wellness and First Aid/CPR Education
- Naloxone Drop-Kits and Education

For assistance or questions, please contact the CARES team at [13CP1@skagitfire13.net](mailto:13CP1@skagitfire13.net) or (360)391-4554.

Thank you to the Swinomish Tribal Community for the grant that makes this program possible for our entire community.

## 2025 INCIDENTS



MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS
Fires	28
Overpressure rupture, explosion, overheat - no fire	1
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	995
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	38
Service Call	124
Good Intent Call	92
False Alarm & False Call	24
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	2
Special Incident Type	44
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1348</b>

### Lithium Battery Safety Guidelines

- Do not leave lithium batteries charging unattended and avoid overcharging . \* Dispose of lithium batteries properly.
- Check lithium batteries for any sign of damage, swelling or leaks before using. \* Store batteries in a cool, dry place.
- Always use the proper charger for your lithium battery.
- When not in use for long periods, store lithium batteries at about a 50% charge level.
- Never attempt to open, disassemble, or modify a lithium battery.



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Skagit County Fire District 13  
17433 Snee-Oosh Road  
La Conner, WA 98274

Resident



## Commissioner Shellhamer Message

Dear District 13 Neighbors and Friends,

We've all experienced the negative effects of inflation and supply chain issues in recent years. If you're a business owner, you've known those too. For your local Fire District 13, it seems both of those issues are exacerbated.

We do our best to take care of our most important treasure, our people. While supporting our people is 75% of our budget – the last few years it has been impossible for us to keep pace with inflation, given our limited income streams which have not kept pace with inflationary pressures. We appreciate their understanding and cooperation in these challenging times, and their continuing professional service to you.

One of the ways we want to support our firefighters – and thus serve you - is with up-to-date and effective equipment and apparatus. The prices of everything we use have increased. For example, pre-inflation, our 5-year plan budgeted \$300,000 for a new Tender; today that same Tender is well over \$650,000 and takes 8 months to have it delivered. Engines and ambulances have increased by similar percentages and wait times – or more.

It's commonly accepted that Fire Service vehicles (aka, "Apparatus") have a 20-year life span; 5 of our 12 vehicles exceed that, while 5 of the 12 are ten years old or less. As vehicle owners yourselves, you know that typically the cost of keeping a vehicle increases as it ages.

I'm grateful to Chief Weiss, Secretary Berg, and other leaders for pursuing alternative sources of funding and support, such as grants. I'm grateful to those and our other officers and firefighters for their faithful attention and adherence to our budget. It is only through their efforts, enhancing and supporting the contributions from the Swinomish Tribe and District 13 property tax revenues, that we can provide the quality of service that we strive to continue and enhance. It is a humbling experience to be a small part of such a great team with large and dedicated hearts to serve.