

Camas-Washougal Fire Department Newsletter

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Year in Review

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Our Mission:

***To provide the highest
quality service to our com-
munity through the protec-
tion and preservation of life
and property***

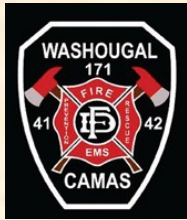
The year 2013 is going to be remembered as one of significant change for CWFD. The biggest project that was finally resolved in 2013 was the longstanding and yet temporary merger of the Camas and Washougal Fire Departments. While the agencies were all but fully consolidated since July of 2011, the partnership depended on a temporary interlocal agreement that had to be renewed twice since its inception. This made long range planning for the organization virtually impossible. In December of 2013, however, the cities of Camas and Washougal decided to take a leap of faith in agreeing to a 10 year contract for service that helps solidify the consolidation and assures that the many benefits both communities have experienced will continue in to the future. Special thanks go to our dedicated staff, elected officials, and the citizens of Camas and Washougal, for making this long term partnership possible.

During the economic crisis CWFD has experienced over the past few years, saving staffing positions understandably became a priority. As a result, replacement of equipment had to be put off as long as possible. This put the department in the position of running very outdated equipment that was expensive to keep operational. With the improved financial condition of the city in 2013, the department was finally able to start replacing an aging ambulance fleet. A new Braun ambulance was approved and delivered in December, with another scheduled for purchase in 2014. A uniform article like coats may seem like a minor issue, but they not only protect our staff from the elements but also increase their safety by making them more visible in low lighting situations. Unfortunately coats like these are very expensive and it had been 10 years since the department could afford to buy new ones. Due to the better financial environment in 2013, and with help from city administration and our finance department, we were finally able to order our staff new coats.

Looking ahead to 2014, CWFD faces opportunities as well as numerous challenges. The first six months of 2014 will mainly be focused on completing the final merger steps. These include moving personnel from one payroll system to another and creating and signing lease agreements on property and equipment. An entirely new Fire/Rescue budget has to be created by our finance department staff, which will be no small undertaking. Amidst this, the department has established 2014 goals of preparing for replacement of further outdated vehicles, improving participation in our volunteer firefighter program, and replacing vacant positions as budget conditions will allow. Our agency is also actively involved in the county radio replacement project, which has the potential to be very expensive if grant assistance is not received. Multiple opportunities exist for the improvement of CWFD in 2014, to include exploration of public/private partnerships, as well as harnessing further efficiencies from our consolidation effort. I very much look forward to facing these challenges with the dedicated staff of CWFD.



Nick Swinhart
Fire Chief
Camas-Washougal Fire Department



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2013 Year in Review Photos:



In early December, CWFD held the first combined captain promotional exam between both cities. We were able to pull together a very dynamic group of evaluators for the process. These included Asst. Chief Dean Thornberry (ECFR), Asst. Chief George Ziesemer (Olympia Fire), Deputy Chief Jeff Bancroft (Portland Fire), Deputy Chief John Nohr (Portland Fire), Capt. Sam Baretich (Aberdeen), Batt. Chief Ken Horn (Clackamas), Asst. Chief Shawn Newberry (Clark 6), Capt. Tim Wright (Vancouver), and Capt. Tom Coval (Vancouver). We very much appreciate the assistance of these individuals!

