



Message from the Fire Chief

Kootenai County Fire & Rescue is the premiere emergency services organization in the State of Idaho and one thing is for sure, we are not a status quo agency. Its personnel assigned to each and every position serve with honor and distinction and the direct service to the citizens of our District is second to none. I am very proud of our personnel for their excellent work every day and for the work many do in the community.

2015 was another year of significant change; one of the most visible is the organizational structure. The agency transitioned to a model where all three (3) division chiefs now report to the Deputy Chief. The net effect is all uniformed members report thru a division chief and the agency now has three major divisions; Emergency Services, EMS Administration and Training & Logistics (see Page 3). Our professional support staff continues to report thru our Director of Administration and the District's Fire Marshal reports directly to the Fire Chief.

Our new Training and EMS Lead program continues to evolve. As with most new programs, a few growing pains have been experienced but the work they are doing has positively affected the organization's performance, effectiveness and delivery.

The Executive Planning process was completed again in October of 2015 that outlined a significant number of projects that needed to be completed during the 2014-2015 fiscal cycle. Staff went to work quickly and focused on a key purchase of three (3) new Fire Engines. With much of the work completed in 2015 thru the apparatus committee, the new pumpers arrived in December 2015 and were put into service in a very short time frame when compared to past efforts. This was accomplished thru great teamwork and leadership by all the participants.

District personnel once again completed 100% of assigned fire inspections. Our code enforcement activity is a key deliverable and important to keeping fires in commercial occupancies at a very low rate.

I am pleased to report that the District completed the 2014-2015 under budget and our annual audit, spearheaded by Director Morrow and Accounting Clerk III, Darci Launderville, had no negative findings; something we have come to expect and highly appreciate. The District remains in a good financial position and will continue to do so as we continue to live within our means.

We continue to work closely with Local 2856 by meeting on a monthly basis to discuss issues of mutual interest and/or importance. The Local continues to be very active in the community, helping those in need through generous donations from the Local and from the individual members. Their efforts helping families and children in need or after a fire do not go unnoticed.

The uniformed members of Local 2856 began a new 48/96 work schedule that is being monitored closely for any negative impacts during its trial period. To date, it seems to be working well. A majority report positive outcomes related to work and family life and administratively we have adjusted accordingly.



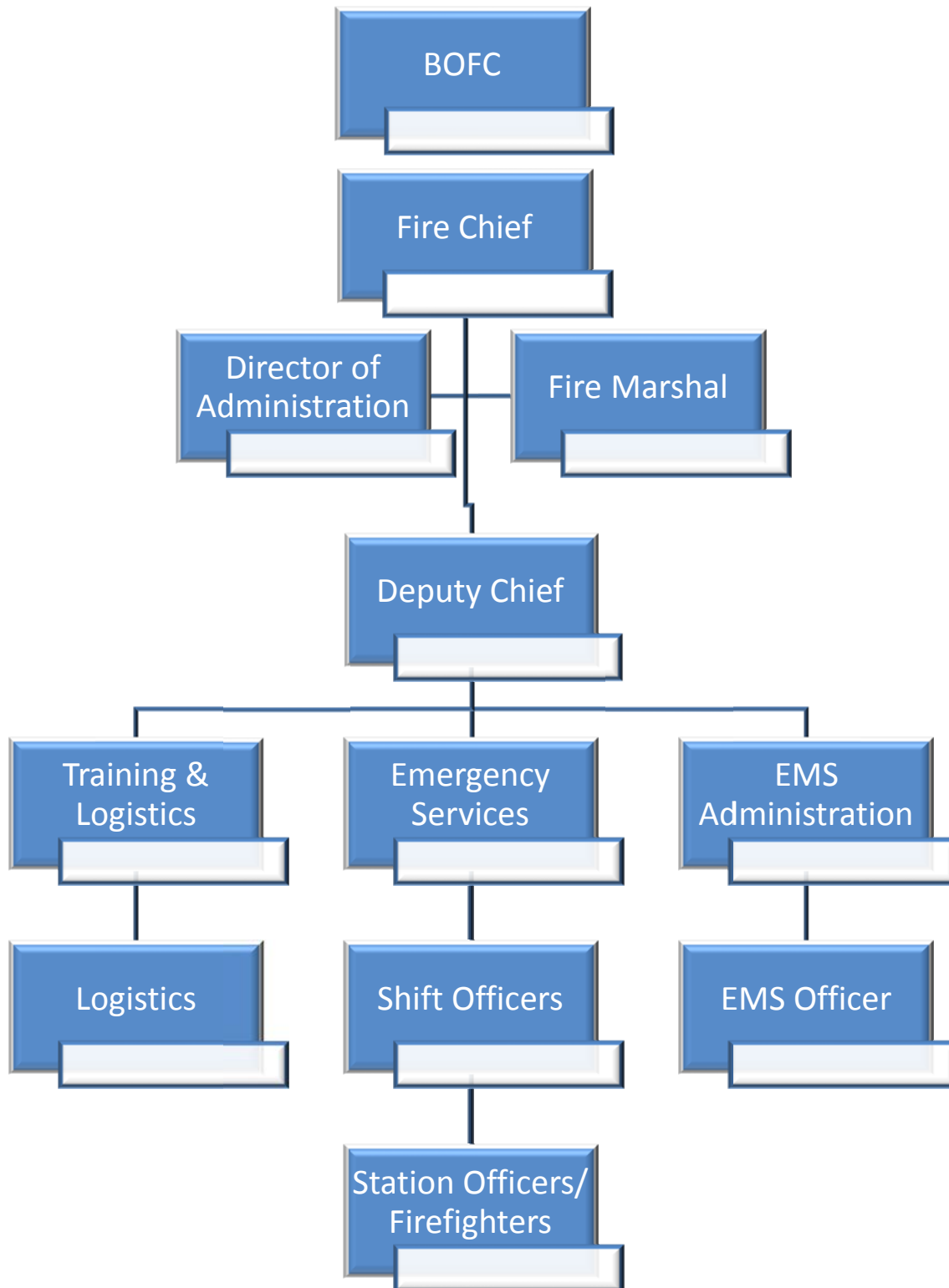
2015 Administrative Field Day hosted by Firefighters Local 2856 – November 17th

Lieutenant Justin Capaul was honored as the District's recipient of the 2015 Dedication and Devotion Award and was recognized by the American Legion as the 2015 Firefighter of the Year. Logistics Manager Todd English was honored as the 2015 recipient of the Commissioners Award, Firefighter Jonathan Gallatin was selected and recognized as the KCFR's Rookie of the Year at our Annual Banquet and Firefighter/Paramedic Shane Anderson was recognized as the 2015 American Legion Paramedic of the Year.

On June 22, 2015 Steven Isaacson was selected as the new Chief of EMS Administration. Chief Isaacson comes from Overland Park, Kansas where he served in the fire department there for over 20 years, 10 years as an EMS Division Chief. Director Samantha Babich retired on July 16, 2015 and Jessie Morrow was selected as the District's new Director of Administration. On August 17, 2015 Darci Lauderville was selected as the District's new Accounting Clerk III. I am pleased to report that all three (3) are doing very well in their new assignments and are great additions to the administrative team. In addition Firefighter/Paramedic Troy Speziale and Firefighter Rex Nielsen resigned from the organization. We wish them well in their new endeavors.

I look forward to working closely with the dedicated men and women of Kootenai County Fire & Rescue as we seek to effectively serve our citizens with care and compassion. A primary goal of mine is to continue to build and maintain trust through open communication, transparency in budget, engaged and thoughtful decision making, and enhancing the growth in all of our personnel that builds depth and breadth for the future. Thank you for taking the time to read this report and please don't hesitate to contact me if there is any way I can be of service.

Warren A. Merritt
Fire Chief



Our Mission Statement

“We protect life, property and our community with Honor, Integrity and Pride.



About Kootenai County Fire & Rescue (KCFR)

Kootenai County Fire & Rescue is governed by a board of five (5) Commissioners elected to serve four (4) year terms. These community members have the discretionary powers to manage and conduct the business and affairs of the fire district, according to Idaho State Law.

KCFR was established in 2001 following the consolidation of Kootenai County Fire Protection District # 1 and the Post Falls Fire Protective District # 1. The District provides a full array of services that includes, but not limited to emergency response for fire and medical emergencies, hazardous materials, and technical rescue emergencies such as swift water rescue, confined space emergencies, trench rescue emergencies, rope rescue for citizens in distress on steep embankments or cliffs, ice rescue, and motor vehicle collisions.

Utilizing the same personnel and professional support staff at Administration, the District also provides non-emergency services calls and medical transportation (facility-to-facility), fire code enforcement, public education for children and adults, juvenile fire setter interaction, blood pressure checks and issuance of burn permits to the public.

Emergency Services

On April 13, 2015, Lieutenant John Ward, while off-duty, rescued his neighbor who was inside her residence and was unable to escape. Lieutenant Ward, without personal protective equipment or a self-contained breathing apparatus, entered the structure and pulled the female occupant to safety. Shortly after exiting the structure it burst into flames. We are extremely proud of Lieutenant Ward for his actions that day. Lieutenant Ward was also recognized as the BLS Provider of the Year by Kootenai County Emergency Medical Services.



In 2015 fire district personnel responded to a total 5,740 incidents, which represents a 6% increase over 2014; an average of 15.7 calls each day (includes NET transports). The increase in calls can be attributed to continued growth of the community.

The District has 24/7 staffing at three (3) fire stations overseen by the Division Chief of Emergency Services (Chief Dan Ryan) and three (3) shift Captains; Captain Larry Sande, Captain Rick Clutter and Captain Ron Graham. Personnel staff three (3) Engine Companies and two (2) Advanced Life Support (ALS) units with firefighter/paramedics. When needed, a Ladder Company utilizing the personnel assigned to the Engine Company at Station 1, can be dispatched to calls requiring the aerial ladder and its equipment and a Rescue Company can be dispatched utilizing the personnel assigned to the Engine Company at Station 3.



In addition to the on-duty suppression personnel, Chief Officers serve as Duty Chief on one-week rotations; on call 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week once every four (4) weeks. The District also works closely with neighboring agencies, which in turn share their resources for major emergencies and cover emergency calls during busy times regardless of jurisdictional boundary.

The District responded to 4,713 requests for emergency medical services; both emergency and non-emergency in nature. EMS represents approximately 80% of the overall emergency workload (includes NET transports). It is important to note that the same firefighters and firefighter/paramedics are utilized to meet the needs of the community for both fire and emergency medical services.

KCFR is the lead agency Hazardous Materials Regional Response Team (RRT 1) and RRT 1 is one of six (6) regional teams statewide. Hazardous material teams are deployed upon request to mitigate releases of any kind and provide diagnostic services for the local fire agency and/or law enforcement. Lieutenant Bryon Johnson serves as Team Leader and works closely with the Bureau of Homeland Security (BHS) for grant funding, requests and reimbursements for hazardous materials call.

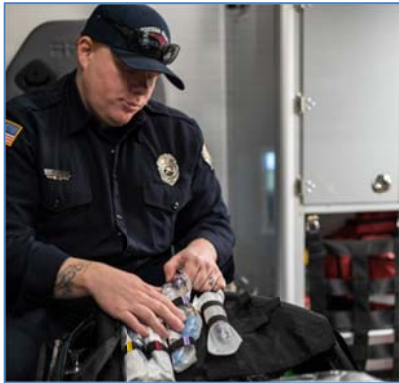
The most significant calls for the team in 2015 were a Mercury release that was in emergency response phase for five (5) days and involved six (6) government agencies locally. The other call was a petroleum release in Benewah County that had the team onsite for three days working with EPA. In addition, in September Firefighter Shaena Pelan represented RRT1 in the annual Urban Shield Competition. The Idaho Team placed 6th overall in the 12-hour hazmat competition; a grueling 12-hour exercise with six (6) back-to-back exercises.

The 2015 wildfire season in North Idaho was one to remember; no rain and hot, dry weather for what seemed like months on end. While KCFR was fortunate to not experience a major wildland incident inside the District, KCFR personnel and resources responded to several in the region. The most notable wildland/urban interface fire was in the Bayview community. KCFR staff and resources supported the effort for over 48 continuous hours and suppression personnel responded

to several other wildland fires in Coeur d'Alene (Tubbs Hill) and the Northern Lakes Fire Districts.

Emergency Medical Services

2015 was a year for transitions. EMS Officer Ken Bookamer, stepped up to the challenge of filling a vacant EMS Leadership role while monitoring oversight of EMS Operations during this year of change. EMS Shift Leads worked together to build and implement training, CQI and EMS Equipment programs designed to keep the operation running and growing. In mid-June, KCFR welcomed our new Division Chief of EMS to our family. Chief Steve Isaacson joins this dynamic team from prior experience as the EMS Chief from Overland Park Fire in the Kansas City Metropolitan area.



The proficiency of our response is dramatically demonstrated again this year by simply looking at success. Five (5) times in 2015, people found by our KCFR staff and responders in cardiac arrest, survived and were eventually released from the hospital. It was not just cardiac arrest, this past summer we responded to a horrific facial trauma that required a once in a career procedure to allow this patient a chance of survival... and she did! Critical decision making ability in these most stressful situations can be the key component to saving lives and protecting property. KCFR crews proved proficient at the critical decision making ability multiple times in 2015.

The current paramedic staffing is at 16. Once again in 2015, KCFR Firefighter/Paramedics mentored newly trained or hired paramedics beginning their time with the team. KCFR had three (3) new members completed the Paramedic precepting (training/orientation) process.

2015 EMS Call breakdown:

- Total calls for service 4,509
- Total Patient contacts: 3,973
- EMS 911 Transports: 2,488
- Non-Emergency Transports: 401

EMS Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process: The Advanced Life Support (ALS) CQI committee reviewed over 480 reports in 2015. The CQI Process continues to be a county-wide model for CQI to the other ALS departments in Kootenai County. In the latter half of the year our process had been implemented by other ALS agencies and



is respected by the Medical Directors as a model of efficiency to be copied. Way to go CQI participants!

We had the incredible opportunity to send four (4) responders to the EMS World conference in the fall. From that educational experience we are seeing new initiatives being discussed, proposed and implemented. One example, several Firefighter/Paramedics are working on FF rehabilitation concepts for on scene rehabilitation of fire crews. This is one clear example of a conference bringing forth positive outcomes in operation.

Perhaps the most obvious change in 2015 is the new ambulances in the fleet. We cannot understate the role KCFR line staff played in both a countywide design committee and preparing the ambulance units for delivery. The hours of commitment has brought forth a safety design that will save lives in the event of an ambulance accident. Job well done! 2016 will be a year to cement good process, refine practices and build strong relationships in our Division. Good things ahead for KCFR EMS!



Kootenai County Emergency Medical Services System (KCEMSS)

Kootenai County Fire and Rescue participates in a County-wide initiative to provide ambulance transport and seamless EMS operations to the citizens and visitors of Kootenai County. This is done through a contractual partnership with Kootenai County Emergency Medical Services System, known as KCEMSS. This extremely unique EMS Operational model is a fire-based ambulance service providing 9-1-1 emergency and facility-to-facility transfers throughout Kootenai County. KCEMSS operates through a network of agencies, including ten fire departments and two (2) non-profit EMS organizations. KCEMSS provides EMS services up to and including paramedic services. The System also provides Critical Care Transport services to the hospitals within Kootenai County as well as hospitals in the surrounding counties of North Idaho upon request. When needed, KCFR also does long distant transports that results in taking patients to Seattle or other far away areas for specialized care.

Working within a County-wide EMS System, KCFR enjoys the operational consistencies and logistical benefits of a large organization and yet enjoys the bond and communication of the local fire district. The system approach allows joint planning, common EMS Protocols, consistency with equipment and seamless response for all of Kootenai County. The best of a large system and the benefits of a neighborhood fire department.

KCFR provides emergency medical services (EMS) and transportation under contract with KCEMSS. In addition to providing excellent medical care, EMS transports are a significant source of revenue for the EMS system that helps keep the EMS Levy, an excess property tax levy, at a low rate. The fees and subsequent collection by itself does not cover the full cost of the

service and the revenue is critical to funding the EMS System. The contract the District has with KCEMSS provides funding for 12 career members that staff medic units (ambulances) 24/7.

KCFR Fire Commissioner Joe Doellefeld is one (1) of five (5) Board members of the Joint Powers Board that oversees KCEMSS and the regional EMS system.

Administrative Team

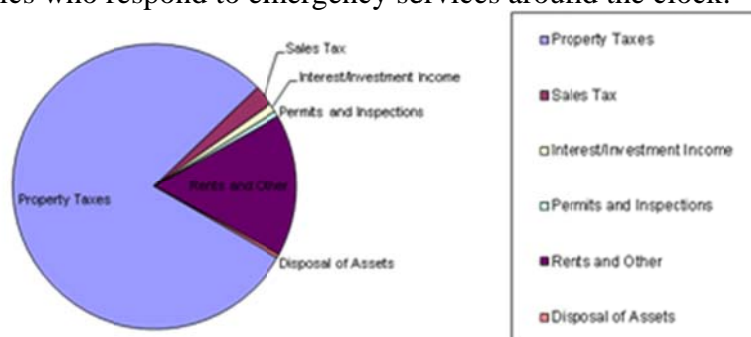
The budget process is a key activity overseen by Director Morrow and Accountant Darci Launderville. The process is structured in a manner that provides for organizational participation and transparency. KCFR's FY2014-15 original budget of \$8,301,754 was amended and approved by the BOFC to increase cash carryforward by \$926,655. The additional revenue was used to purchase three (3) new engines that replaced an aging fleet. The approved amended budget was \$9,228,409, an increase of \$926,655.

The final net taxable property values for KCFR in 2013 were \$2,987,042,257 up \$48,498,282 from the estimated net taxable property values of \$2,938,543,975 and the final 2014 net taxable property values were \$3,259,487,293 up \$24,837,328 from the estimated 2014 net taxable property values of \$3,234,649,965. It is expected property values will increase as our economy continues to recover. The preliminary estimated net taxable property value for 2015 is \$3,378,597,545 which is up approximately 3.65%. We'll know if those property values hold in March of 2016.

The District's levy rate for 2015 was 0.001929461, an increase of 0.00007972 over the previous year which was 0.001921489. Our current FY15-16 budget is \$8,714,857 with a levy rate of 0.001921489.

As you can see from our total revenues by source, we are funded mainly by property taxes; eighty percent (80%). Of the remaining 20%, almost 15% is from our second major source of income, Rents and Other (see graph on Page 8).

One major source of Rents and Other is the contract we have with Kootenai County Emergency Medical Services Systems; \$1,166,000. The contract is to reimburse the District for the costs associated with staffing two (2) ambulances and 12 firefighters; six (6) Firefighter/EMTs and six (6) Firefighter/Paramedics who respond to emergency services around the clock.



Administrative Team

The response and support operations of the District are enabled by the dedicated team of administrative personnel headed by our Director of Administration, Jessie Morrow. This team (Darci Launderville, Laurie Perkinson and Jayme Nipp) ensures payroll, management of benefits, vendor payments, supports the District's information technology needs, greets the public and manages their needs, schedules District facility usage, support District activities, website management, management of assets and District records, ensures compliance with Human Resources and District policies, and provides direct support to the Board of Commissioners.

A major activity each year is the “Christmas for All” campaign. The administrative staff along with volunteers worked diligently to assist in the distribution of approximately 3,000 gift and grocery cards to citizens in need. In 2015 the effort was buoyed by a few citizen volunteers who reduced the workload and stress on the KCFR staff.

The Admin team is critical to the District's success. The workgroup is very efficient and effective and they support the organization's ability to meet our core mission of emergency response. It would be impossible to list everything this team does and be accurate.

Training & Logistics

Total Training hours recorded for 2015 were 15,697. The Training Tower is being used consistently by not only our own crews but also by other agencies such as PFPD, The National Guard, INHS, North Idaho Fire Chiefs and the Sheriff's department.

In 2015 KCFR personnel attended multiple training classes. These include but are not limited to, Fire Officer II, Firehouse World, Hazmat week, NIESA Academy, Extrication Ops, NFA Leadership II, EMS World, EMS Workshop, Emergency Medical Services Incident Operations, RAD Refresher, EMS Summit, Crash Zone, Emotional survival, Boise safety symposium, Urban Shield, EMS World, SLICERS, Northwest emergency medical services, HR Law, Gordon Graham, EMS Workshop, Fire code official, NFA Leadership I, Critical thinking, Boater Safety Course, RIT, Ropes I, ICS 300, ICS 400, and 24 of our personnel attended the fall Fire Officer Development Academy (FODA).

KCFR is working toward a remodel of the Training Center which will enhance our facility for our local use, but will be an asset as a regional training facility that will benefit many agencies in the area. Logistics have been very busy with keeping our facilities and apparatus running smoothly. Some of the larger task that have been accomplished by them is the addition of the pump testing station that was created by using one of the train tanker cars, a new generator for the Administration building that will keep our technology infrastructure up and running 7 x 24, the purchase of a new staff vehicle and preparation for the arrival of three (3) new Engines.

The staff at the Shop plays a key role in the delivery of emergency medical services which includes the maintenance and warranty work for 15 ambulances.

Fire Marshal

In 2015 KCFR once again met its goal of completing 100% of its assigned inspections. 535 businesses were contacted by KCFR with inspections being conducted by engine companies, ambulance crews and the Fire Marshal's Office. 19 new commercial construction projects were finalized the largest of which was the new 63,000 square foot ATC building on Lean Street. Licensing inspections were completed for 22 day care facilities in Post Falls. In Dalton Gardens 241 construction inspections were completed and 94 plan reviews (almost everyone in Dalton has a shop now) and the growing trend is to demolish an existing home so that a newer bigger one may be built in its place. Hayden Lake was a little slower with 58 inspections and 16 plan reviews. Although Hayden Lake doesn't produce the volume of construction projects they are certainly much more complicated with almost a 2-1 man-hour increase over inspections and plan reviews for Dalton Gardens. Commercial work in our district accounted for 101 various types of construction inspections and 49 plan reviews. In the outlying areas 47 driveway inspections were completed on new projects making sure our response units can access homes.

The Greensferry Overpass was completed opening up the Seltice Way corridor for more commercial growth. Multi-family residential units (apartments) seemed to be the order of the day for 2015 with multiple projects being completed, started or in the design queue. Multi-family residential units make up 21% of the residential living units in Post Falls, with the national average at 31%. The trend is that these will not be slowing down any time soon.

With Ms. Perkinson's help and a program she presented on at the Senior Center district personnel installed smoke detectors in 10 homes. The Fire Marshal's Office also conducted 20 fire investigations with the majority of those being related to an open arson investigation case in the Hayden/ Dalton area.

The Kootenai County Arson Task Force was re-established consisting of KCFR, CDA Fire, NLFD, Idaho State Fire Marshal's Office, SLFD and MKI Fire. Fire Marshal Archer chairs this important Task Force and regularly attends IAAI training in Spokane with Washington and Idaho Fire Investigators.

Partnerships

The success of KCFR will continue to depend on partnerships. This includes our regional fire agency partners; Coeur d' Alene, Northern Lakes, Timberlake, Spirit Lake, East Side Fire District, Hauser Lake, Mica Kidd Island, and Worley Fire. Mutual Aid occurs almost daily with our contiguous agencies and in addition to saving taxpayer's money, *it works very well*. Locally

we continue to work very close with the Post Falls Police Department, the Sheriff's Department, and KCFR is the lead organization for the Region 1 HazMat Team.

KCFR staff will continue to explore regional partnerships where it makes sense to do so. We continued to work with Spokane Valley Fire Department towards mutual and/or automatic aid along Interstate 90 and the State Line area. Spokane Valley has expressed interest in incident support for wildland fires utilizing the tender and brush truck resource we have. In response to this need a Joint Wildland Task Force was implemented and utilized on two (2) occasions in 2015 for major wildland fires in Spokane County.

Community Support

District members worked throughout the year to raise money and collect food for citizens in need. Activities such as the annual “Candy Cane Run”, “Soup Off”, “Christmas for All”, Holidays & Heroes and several fund raising efforts for local charitable organizations defines what the District and its members are all about; service and taking care of our community. It is worth noting that a number of District staff participates in the community outside their regular work. They belong to civic organizations, the Urban Renewal Agency, Senior Center, and the Post Falls Food Bank.



Confined Rescue Tank donation by Ground Force Worldwide (April 2015) – Ron Nilson, President

A look at 2016...

A primary focus in 2016 is the completion of key capital projects in anticipation of staffing Station 2 in April 2017. These include remodels to Station 2 and Station 3, the completion of the Shop Remodel (Phase II – office, library and new bays), and the remodel of the Training Center building (will start in 2016).

The District will continue to secure partnerships in the community such as Ground Force Worldwide, who donated the confined space tank at the Maintenance & Training complex.

I look forward to working with the Board and all members of KCFR in 2016 and beyond. No doubt 2016 will be a busy and productive year for all as we work together to protect and meet the needs of our community, take care of our members and their families and keep our personnel as safe as we can.

I know you are as proud of our personnel as I am and honored to be the District's Fire Chief. Thank you for taking the time to read this report.

Warren A. Merritt, Fire Chief