



2014 Annual Report

Message from the Fire Chief

Much like the last decade, 2014 was another year of change for Kootenai County Fire & Rescue (KCFR) with many great accomplishments because the agency “worked together” to complete projects that had been agreed upon during the Annual Planning Seminar in October. The District continued to provide great service in the field, at our Shop and at the Administrative office to our internal and external customers and stakeholders.

A significant accomplishment was the implementation of the EMS Officer and three (3) EMS Leads to the District. Ken Bookamer was selected as the new EMS Officer and Peter Holley, Ryan Asher and Kevin Lawler were selected as the new EMS Leads for Red, Blue and Green shifts respectively. Full credit goes to Division Chief Bill Keeley for forwarding the initiative and the Board of Fire Commissioners for their support.

The Executive Planning process was completed again in October of 2014 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 a new Fire Engine. With much of the work completed in 2014 thru the apparatus committee, the new pumper is expected to arrive in September 2015.

Our Fire Prevention efforts continued and 99% of all assigned code enforcement inspections were completed. Beginning in 2014 the goal is to complete 50% of the inspections each year for two years, while monitoring for any negative impacts related to fires in commercial occupancies. In addition, a capital project to expand the capability and capacity of our Shop was approved and completed. The new Shop has sufficient equipment to manage all apparatus including the District’s aerial ladder.

I am happy to report that the District completed the 2013-2014 under budget and our annual audit, spearheaded by Jessie Morrow, 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.



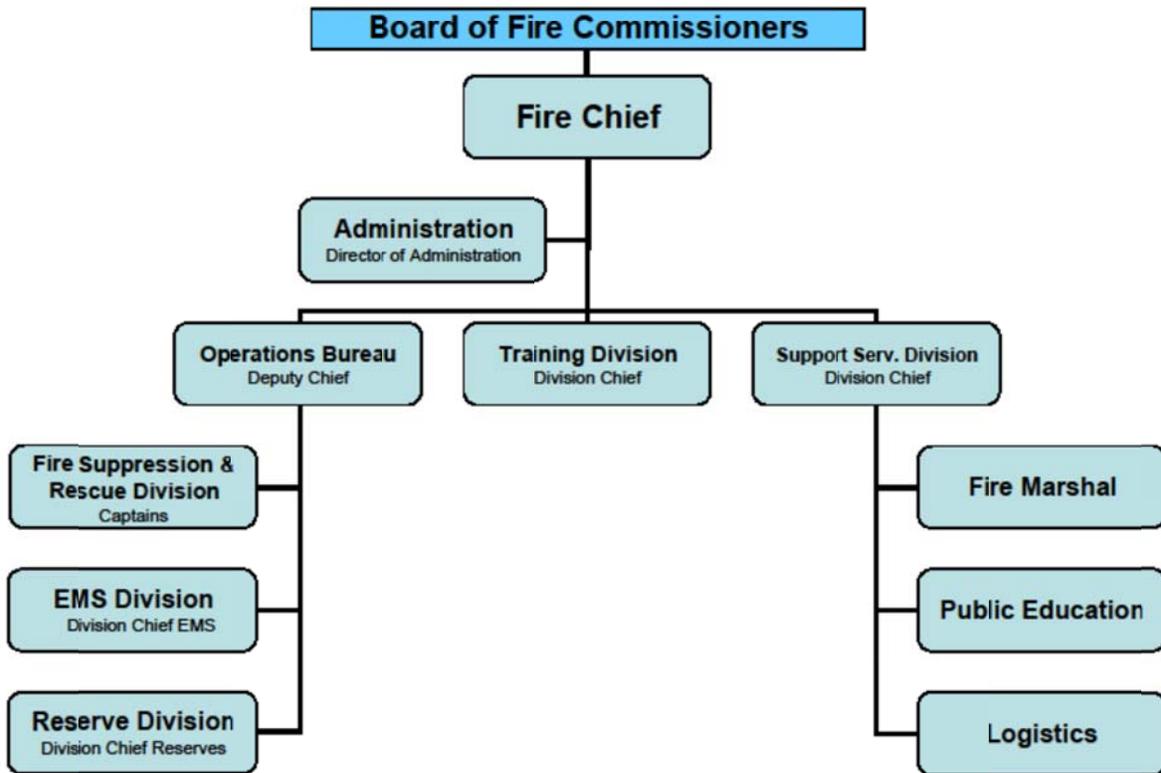
Commissioner Michael Hunt and Fire Chief Warren Merritt recognizing Former Mayor Larkin as “*Honorary Fire Chief*” for KCFR in January 2014

Firefighter Peter Holley was honored as the District’s recipient of the 2014 Dedication and Devotion Award and Lieutenant Justin Capaul for the Commissioner’s Award. Kaipo Kuehu and Peter Holley were recognized by the American Legion as the Legion’s Firefighter and Paramedic of the Year respectively.

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 the public and staff’s 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

Kootenai County Fire & Rescue



Updated 04/02/2013

Our Mission Statement

We serve proudly the changing needs of our community by providing the highest quality Emergency, Safety and Support services with:

Professionalism

Education

Organizational Integrity

Performance

Leadership

Effectiveness

Our people pledge a commitment to preserving quality of life. We protect lives, property, and the environment with compassion, vigilance, and dedication to excellence.



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.

Operations

In 2014 fire district personnel responded to a total 5,344 incidents, which represents a 9% increase over 2013; an average of 14.6 calls each day (includes NET transports). The increase in

calls can be attributed to the growth in NET transports despite a change in policy that has Northern Lakes Fire District being the primary NET provider and a substantial increase in emergency call activity.



The District has 24/7 staffing at three (3) fire stations overseen by the Deputy Chief of Operations (Chief Aaron Jones) 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 4.

In addition to the on-duty suppression personnel, the 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 4,040 requests for emergency medical services; both emergency and non-emergency in nature. EMS represents approximately 75.75% 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. In September 2014 KCFR responded to a significant hazmat call just across the state line in Washington at the request of Spokane Valley Fire Department. The event lasted over 24 hours and from it the District has begun a new relationship with Spokane City Fire and Fairchild Air Force Base; training and developing an agreement for response.

Emergency Medical Services

The EMS Division was directed by the District's EMS Division Chief, Division Chief Bill Keeley until his retirement on September 30, 2014 at which time Deputy Chief Jones stepped in to oversee the Division. Current paramedic staffing is at 15 with no students in paramedic school. Internally, KCFR Firefighter/Paramedics were very busy precepting newly trained or hired paramedics. As a District seven (7) new members were hired and one (1) new member completed the precepting process.

Paramedics meet regularly to participate in continuing medical education that includes didactic material, run reviews (360 per year), and updates on changes in protocols. A present and continuing issue is the availability of certain medications used in the care of



ALS patients. This problem is not isolated to Kootenai County; it is a national problem for providers of advanced life support care and continues to be monitored and it is expected to continue as pharmaceutical companies react to market influences.



Kootenai County Emergency Medical Services System (KCEMSS)

KCEMSS 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.

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. Commissioner Joe Doellefeld is one of five Board members of the Joint Powers Board that oversees KCEMSS and the regional EMS system.

Budget

The budget process is a key activity overseen by Director Babich and Accountant Jessie Morrow. The process is structured in a manner that provides for organizational participation and transparency. KCFR's FY2013-14 original budget of \$7,336,282 was amended and approved by the BOFC to include additional interest income of \$67,700 and cash carryforward of \$110,703. The additional revenue was used to complete facility projects that were underway. The approved amended budget was \$7,514,685, and an increase of \$178,403.

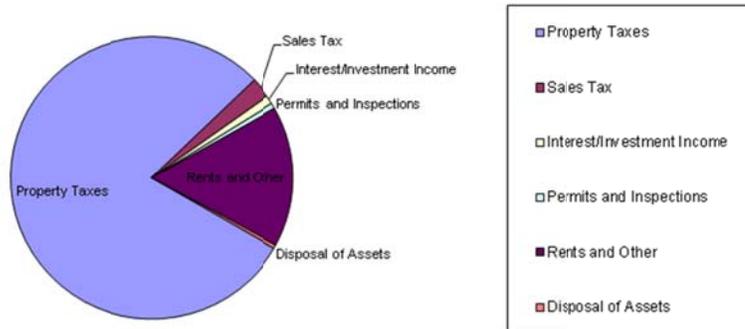
The final net taxable property values for KCFR in 2012 were \$2,894,878,825 up \$21,771,287 from the estimated net taxable property values of \$2,873,107,538 and the final 2013 net taxable

property values were \$2,987,042,257 up \$48,498,282 from the estimated 2013 net taxable property values of \$2,938,543,975. Although it was expected property values may have a slight increase, the increase of 3.2% was extremely welcomed. The preliminary estimated net taxable property value for 2014 is \$3,234,649,965 which is up approximately 8.29%. We'll know if those property values hold in March of 2015.

Our levy rate for 2014 was 0.0020086930, an increase of 0.00002135 over the previous year which was 0.001987343. Our current FY14-15 budget is \$8,301,754 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 our revenues came from property taxes. 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.



Reserve Program

On April 1, 2014 the Reserve Program was officially decommissioned. Reserves “or Volunteers” have been a backbone of the community for many years. We thank Division Chief Tom Barrett for his work as the Division Chief of Reserves and for his 32 years of service with the District; 28 as a volunteer and five (5) as a career member. We wish Tom well and he will be missed.

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, Samantha Babich. This team (Jessie Morrow, 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.

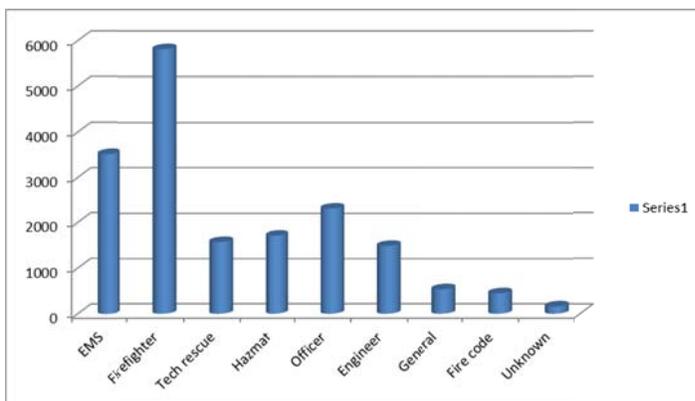
A major activity each year is the “Christmas for All” campaign. The administrative staff along with volunteers worked diligently to assist in the distribution of approximately 3,000 gift and grocery cards to citizens in need. In 2014 the effort was buoyed by a few citizen volunteers who reduced the workload 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

The Training Division is managed by Division Chief Heath Sheppard. Like Support Services there is a significant amount of work done ‘behind the scenes.’ Working with the other KCFR divisions, District personnel recorded 17,613 hours of training in 2014. Much of the training was completed at the “company level” for our emergency response personnel. The Training Division provided direction and worked closely with training liaisons to develop and coordinate training for suppression personnel. During the process a new annual training plan was developed and implemented for members assigned to suppression and all the chief officers.

Training Leads were implemented on October 1, 2014. They work closely with the Training Division, Shift Officers and Station Officers to meet operational needs.



The Training Division worked on multiple projects during 2014 under the direction of the Division Chief of Training. Activities included continued development of the District’s Training Manual, and promotional testing that was coordinated with Administration and Operations. The District’s training tower is being used consistently by some of our regional partners on a regular basis; Post Falls Police, North Idaho Fire Chiefs Association, the National Guard, Spirit Lake Fire, and the Sheriff’s Department.

District personnel attend many classes during and off work which maximizes the District’s financial resources. The culture at KCFR is extremely positive as it relates to personal and operational readiness. Some classes include but are not limited to Human resource law,

Extrication Ops, Coeur d'Alene EMS conference, BNSF Hazmat awareness, Hazmat week, Rescue 42, Firefighter rehab, Critical thinking, Brannigan building construction, ICS for High-rise, RIT, Ropes II, G-130-190, Trench rescue, ICS 300, ICS 400. The District continues to send large numbers of personnel to the annual NIESA academy and Fall Officer Development Academy.

KCFR continues to play a major role in the North Idaho Emergency Services Academy (NIESA) through the use of our Maintenance & Training complex, apparatus, equipment, and instructors. KCFR and its citizenry should be proud of our participation and support of regional training.

Support Services

The Support Services is directed by a Division Chief Ryan. Support Services also includes the District's Fire Marshal (Captain Archer), a Logistics Manager (Todd English) and one (1) emergency vehicle technician (Matt Dilley). The Support Services Division works closely with Kootenai County Office of Emergency Management, the Local Emergency Planning Committee and the Wildland Urban Interface Committee. Much of the work done by Support Services is 'not seen' by the public but is absolutely essential to support our core mission.

In 2014, KCFR staff and response personnel completed 531 annual commercial fire code inspections. The Fire Marshal works closely with Kootenai County and the Cities of Post Falls, Dalton Gardens and Hayden Lake, and other partner agencies with a strong focus on improving community safety through prevention.

Logistics oversees the District's fleet and facility assets. Regular maintenance is performed on all equipment and apparatus that keeps our operating costs as low as possible while also doing regular maintenance, repairs and installations on all ambulances owned and operated by KCEMSS. In addition to fleet, Logistics also provides repair and maintenance of the District's other physical assets; Eight (8) fire stations, 33 vehicles (Inc. Pumpers, aerial ladder, rescue truck, hazmat vehicle, ambulances and staff support vehicles) and two (2) fire boats. In addition to KCFR assets, the Shop maintains 15 ambulances for KCEMSS. Logistics does any research and preparation that is necessary for improvements such as pavement work and maintenance of HVAC units and also manages the distribution of supplies for station maintenance, EMS, and does a majority of the purchasing for small equipment.

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 made available to Spokane County for major events.

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.

A look at 2015...

District staff comprised of chiefs, captains, managers, and our accountant, met in November 2014 and agreed to a work plan for the 2014-2015 fiscal period. The material is on the District Share Point site that is accessible to all personnel. The work plan was developed to centralize required work and prioritize projects that need to be completed throughout the year.

Key items will include but are not limited to information technology investments, follow-through on approved capital projects, meet or be under authorized budget, establish recommended budget for 2014-2015 for the BOFC’s consideration, purchase and install a generator for Administration, purchase a new pumper, one staff car, and meet the expectations of our internal and external customers.

I look forward to working with the Board and all members of KCFR in 2015 and beyond. No doubt 2015 will be a busy and productive year for all as we work together to protect and meet the needs of our community.