

VERNONIA RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Help Needed

Your Fire District needs help

Do you have a little time here and there? Would you like to volunteer, but not respond to calls, and have skills outside of firefighting? Stop by or give us a call.

We could use help in all areas of operation. Anything that can lighten the load of the current personnel, paid and volunteer, will assist with the general well-being of the group. This helps our responders from being

overwhelmed with excessive chores on top of training. This also allows some of us to work more diligently on priority projects to keep the district moving forward. At the forefront right now, we could use some help with office work, tracking department history, Public Information Officer, grounds keeper, and tech support.

If by chance you have been thinking about volunteering for Fire or EMS positions, PLEASE DO SO! We need responders as well and with our new training officer, training times can be flexible if needed.

This year the district responded to 630 calls, up from 607 last year. We do not have the official break down of medical vs. fire vs. crash, etc. at this point, but we do know that the average response to a call was two personnel. The response time of our neighboring districts are roughly 25-30 minutes, which means that in the event of something major, we are significantly understaffed for some of the most important moments of these events. The only way to change this is to have more volunteers available, trained, and committed to responding when needed.



Build Your Emergency Supply Kit

A disaster supply kit is simply a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency. During the winter months we may experience extended periods of time without electricity here in Vernonia. Preparing your Emergency Supply Kit begins before the power goes out.

Try to assemble your kit well in advance of an emergency. You may have to evacuate at a moment's notice and take essentials with you. You will probably not have time to search for the supplies you need or shop for them.

You may need to survive on your own after an emergency. This means having your own food, water and other supplies in sufficient quantity to last for at least 72 hours. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours or it might take days.

Additionally, basic services such as electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment, and telephones may be cut off for days or even a week, or longer. Your supply kit should contain items to help you manage during these outages.

Food

Consider the following things when putting together your emergency food supplies:

- Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food.
- Choose foods your family will eat. Remember any special dietary needs.
- Avoid foods that will make you thirsty. Choose salt-free crackers, whole grain cereals, and canned foods with high liquid content.
- Stock canned foods, dry mixes, and other staples that do not require refrigeration, cooking, water or special preparation. Be sure to include a manual can opener and eating utensils.

Suggested Emergency Food Supplies

- The following items are suggested when selecting emergency food supplies. You may already have many of these on hand.
- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables, and a can opener
 - Protein or fruit bars
 - Dry cereal or granola
 - Peanut butter
 - Dried fruit and nuts
 - Crackers (low salt)
 - Canned juices
 - Non-perishable pasteurized milk
 - High energy foods

- Vitamins
- Food for infants
- Comfort/stress foods

Food, Safety, and Sanitation

Power outages can occur at any time of the year and it may take from a few hours to several days for electricity to be restored to residential areas, which could jeopardize the safety of your food. Without electricity or a cold source, food stored in refrigerators and freezers can become unsafe. Bacteria in food grow rapidly at temperatures between 40 and 140°F, and if these foods are consumed, people can become very sick.

Do:

- Keep food in covered containers.
- Keep cooking and eating utensils clean.
- Keep garbage in closed containers and dispose outside, burying garbage if necessary.
- Keep your hands clean by washing them frequently with soap and water that has been boiled or disinfected.
- Discard any food that has come into contact with contaminated floodwater or that has been at room temperature for two hours or more.
- Discard any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture.
- Use ready-to-feed formula, if

possible, for formula-fed infants. If using ready-to-feed formula is not possible, it is best to use bottled water to prepare powdered or concentrated formula. If bottled water is not available, use boiled water. Breastfed infants should continue breastfeeding.

Don't:

- Eat foods from cans that are swollen, dented or corroded, even though the product may look safe to eat.
- Eat any food that looks or smells abnormal, even if the can looks normal.
- Let garbage accumulate inside, both for fire and sanitation reasons.

Note: Thawed food usually can be eaten if it is still "refrigerator cold." It can be re-frozen if it still contains ice crystals. To be safe, remember, "When in doubt, throw it out."

For more information about food safety during an emergency, visit FoodSafety.gov.

Water

Water is an essential element to survival and a necessary item in an emergency supply kit. Following a disaster clean drinking water may not be available. Your regular water source could be cut off or compromised through contamination. Prepare yourself by building a supply of water that will meet your family's needs during an emergency.

You should store at least one gallon of water per person for three days. To determine your water needs, take the following into account:

- One gallon of water per person per day, for drinking and

sanitation.

- Children, nursing mothers, and sick people may need more water.
- A medical emergency might require additional water.
- In very hot temperatures, water needs can double.
- It is recommended you purchase commercially bottled water, in order to prepare the safest and most reliable emergency water supply. Store in cool, dark place.

Preparing Your Own Containers of Water

If you decide to prepare your own containers of water follow these recommendations:

- Purchase food grade water storage containers from surplus or camping supplies stores to use for water storage.
 - Before filling with water, thoroughly clean the containers with dishwashing soap and water and rinse completely so there is no residual soap.
 - If you choose to use your own storage containers, choose two-liter plastic soft drink bottles – not plastic jugs or cardboard containers that have had milk or fruit juice in them. Milk protein and fruit sugars cannot be adequately removed from these containers and provide an environment for bacterial growth when water is stored in them. Cardboard containers also leak easily and are not designed for long-term storage of liquids. Also, do not use glass containers, because they can break and are heavy.
- You can view these safety tips and find other resources for Emergency Preparedness at: Ready.gov.

More About Chimney Fires

The largest percentage (65%) of chimney related fires occur between November and February.1 During these months chimney fires account for nearly one out of every three home fires. Looking at houses and apartments in Oregon from 2011 through 2015, there were a total of 2,968 fires that either were confined to a chimney/flue or started in a fireplace, chimney, or flue and extended to the structure. During this period these fires resulted in 13 injuries and more than \$13 million in estimated damage.

Most fires involving chimneys are confined to the chimney or flue. These confined fires rarely result in serious injury and account for just 2% of estimated losses in chimney related fires. The average estimated loss per fire that was confined to the chimney or flue was \$96. Conversely, 17% of chimney fires spread to become building fires, accounting for 98% of estimated losses in chimney related fires. The average estimated loss per fire that was not confined to the chimney or flue was more than \$26,000.

Additional chimney related fire statistics:

- Half of all chimney fires occurred between

4:00 pm and 9:00 pm

- There has been a 7.5% average decrease in chimney fire incidents over the last five years.
- The average dollar loss from a chimney fire that spreads to the structure is about 270 times greater than the average dollar loss from a chimney fire confined to the chimney.

The trends, issues, and threats associated with chimney fires in a local community can easily be identified through complete and accurate incident reports. By understanding the prevalence and causes of chimney fires in their local jurisdictions, fire agencies can lead public education campaigns to help prevent these types of fires.

The following can help prevent fires:

- Have chimney and woodstove flues inspected and cleaned each year by a qualified chimney sweep.
- Burn only dry, seasoned wood; it causes less buildup in the chimney.
- Never use a flammable liquid such as lighter fluid, kerosene, or gasoline to start a fire.

Calls responded to December 1-31

Fire	2
Emergency Medical Service	40
Hazardous Condition	0
Service Call	9
Good Intent	1
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	0
Special Incident	0
No Emergency Found	0
False Alarm	0
Total	52