

VERNONIA RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Autumn is Back

By: Robert Schattschneider

Well autumn is upon us with all of the seasonal changes and activities that we all enjoy. Whether it's the changing of the leaves, fall festivities, or hunting season, autumn has just about something to offer everyone.

With Halloween just around the corner, let's remember our little ghosts and goblins, princes and princesses will be out trick or treating before you know it. Keep them in mind when the time comes so they can all have a safe and

fun night out collecting candy and other goodies.

Autumn also means that our daily weather will start to be in the form of liquid precipitation. I'd like to remind everyone that our roads out this neck of the woods get pretty slippery when wet. Take the time to slow down a bit on your commute into the valley. Leaving a few minutes early will make up for the time that you spend being careful.

Bow season is over, but rifle season for deer has just begun. I think we all know someone who goes deer

and elk hunting. With that being said, keep an eye out for our four legged friends. They will be active from the pressure put on them by the hunters, and Mother Nature will also have those bucks and bulls working overtime chasing after their female counterparts. So, while you are out and about, keep an extra eye out for them crossing the road.

And lastly, it will not be long before we have some overnight freezing temperatures. Whether it's in the form of ice, snow, or heavy frost, it will add



some time to your commute. Keep the temperature in mind when you are out traveling our highways and forest roads.

Chimney Fires

As temperatures begin to drop, Oregonians will start using their fireplaces and woodstoves, and fire agencies will find themselves responding to 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 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 we can all help prevent these types of fires.

Reminders that 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
- Safe practices such as using a fireplace screen, keeping combustibles away from heat sources, and properly disposing of ashes will also translate to fewer fires.

The Office of State Fire Marshal has educational materials covering home heating and many other topics. You can review and order materials on the OSFM website. https://www.oregon.gov/osp/SFM/docs/Comm_Ed/Gated_Wye/2016/November_16_GatedWye.pdf.

'Tis the Season

The most wonderful time of the year is around the corner once again. However, for some, the most wonderful time of year is the most stressful. With the cost of items increasing in the blink of an eye, our wallets become pinched and we become worried. Instead of enjoying our time with our families, we are worried about how we are going to supply them with the things they may want or need.

Luckily, in our small town, the Vernonia Fire Association has tried to help take that stress away from families. With the help of donations from our community, we have been able to help give the children of Vernonia toys for Christmas. The day after Thanksgiving, our donation barrels go around to various locations throughout town to collect new, unwrapped toys for us to be able to give out. Alongside the barrels are the applications. We ask questions about age, interests, and gender so that we can try and supply the correct items for the children. In order to receive toys, the applications need to be filled out completely and turned in on time. The applications are due on the 11th of December. Applications turned in after the 11th will not be guaranteed toys. We try our best to fill the community's needs, but it is stressful on us receiving late applica-

tions and not having the correct amount of toys. Applications are processed, and toys are wrapped and delivered before Christmas day. The date of pick up and delivery will be on the applications.

This year, you will also see coloring pages at the barrels to be entered into the Vernonia Ambulance Association Coloring Contest. Entries can be submitted at the Fire Station, and can be worked on at Santa's breakfast on December 8th. Join us at the station with Santa and his elves from 8:00 - 10:30 am. Coloring contest awards will be given out at 10:00.

The Vernonia Fire Association and the Vernonia Ambulance Association work hand-in-hand to make Toy and Joy happen for our community, and pride themselves in taking care of the community in more ways than one. However, our helping hands numbers are running low, and we are always looking for volunteers. Firefighter and EMT applications are always available at the station, but around the holidays we are always looking for holiday helpers. We can sign off for community service hours and we always have fun. We are here to serve and help the community and appreciate all the help we can get. 'Tis the season to help.

Bailey Wegner - Toy and Joy Chair

Calls responded to September 1-30

Fire	1
Emergency Medical Service	45
Hazardous Condition	1
Service Call	15
Good Intent	1
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	0
Special Incident	0
No Emergency Found	0
False Alarm	1
Total	64

VOLUNTEERS WANTED



VERNONIA RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

VRFPD is currently accepting applications for Volunteer Fire Fighters

- You must have a High School Diploma or G.E.D., a valid Oregon Driver's License, and be at least 18 years of age
- Currently, you must be able to attend weekly training on Monday nights
- Willing to attend the Fire Academy
- Live or work (employer willing to let you respond to calls) within VRFPD's District
- Applications can be picked up at the Fire Station

VRFPD
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Here's What We Do!

