

VERNONIA RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Local Firefighters Sent to Mosier Creek Fire

The Office of State Fire Marshal assists and supports the Oregon fire service during major emergency operations through the Conflagration Act (ORS 476.510). The Conflagration Act was developed in 1940 as a civil defense measure and can be invoked only by the governor. The act allows the State Fire Marshal to mobilize firefighters and equipment from around the state. The Conflagration Act is only used for fires that involve or threaten life and structures.

The Columbia County task force was dispatched August 13 to the Mosier Creek Fire,

which escalated quickly from 50 to 500 homes threatened. Vernonia sent Operations Chief Rob Davis out to assist with the Incident Management Team. Training Chief Will Steinweg, Firefighter Trish Smith, and Firefighter Brandi Abney are staffing apparatus to assist on the fire line. These staff members and volunteers reschedule their personal and work timelines to ensure that all communities remain safe.

The VRFPD still has responding units, modified apparatus callouts, and volunteers available at their normal response rates to make sure we are supporting our home district.

Dealing With Heat

With the hot weather sticking around for a few more weeks, VRFPD would like the community to be aware of heat related illnesses and how to prevent them.

Your body normally cools itself by sweating. During hot weather, especially when it is very humid, sweating just isn't enough to cool you off. Your body temperature can rise to dangerous levels and you can develop a heat illness.

Most heat illnesses happen when you stay out in the heat too long. Exercising and working outside in high heat can also lead to heat illness. Older adults, young children, and those who are sick or overweight are most at risk. Taking certain medicines or drinking alcohol can also raise your

risk.

Heat-related illnesses include:

- Heat stroke – a life-threatening illness in which body temperature may rise above 106° F in minutes. Symptoms include dry skin, a rapid, strong pulse, dizziness, nausea, and confusion. If you see any of these signs, get medical help right away.
- Heat exhaustion – an illness that can happen after several days of exposure to high temperatures and not enough fluids. Symptoms include heavy sweating, rapid breathing, and a fast, weak pulse. If it is not treated, it can turn into heat stroke.
- Heat cramps – muscle pains or spasms that happen during heavy exercise. You usually get



Vernonia Firefighters at the Mosier Creek Fire

them in your abdomen, arms, or legs.

- Heat rash – skin irritation from excessive sweating. It is more common in young children.

You can lower your risk of heat illness by drinking fluids to prevent dehydration, replacing lost salt and minerals, and limiting your time in the heat.

New Program, New Equipment

By Rob Davis
Operations Division Chief

We have been busy to say the least since our last article! I want to start off this issue by thanking our dedicated volunteers for their consistent response to emergency calls in this community! Part of our Local Option Levy was to implement a Resident Volunteer program to support college students looking to get into the Fire Service and Emergency Medical Services, as well as assist in increasing staffing to our community. We have accepted four students into the program and expect two of them to start in Vernonia on August 24 and the other two will be stationed at Mist-Birkenfeld. We are still looking to fill an additional two positions in the program. If you know anyone that is interested

please have them reach out to us!

We have recently placed an Interface Fire Engine into service. This is a specialized apparatus used to fight urban interface and wild land fires. You may see it in town and realize that it looks a little different, mostly its color! We were able to save a significant amount of money by purchasing a low mileage used apparatus out of California, while significantly increasing our service delivery capabilities. This money was pulled from the Bond Fund that was passed several years ago to purchase a new Water Tender and Brush rig.

To close, we want to continue to thank the community for the support we receive. We exist because of all of you, and we are forever grateful for everything you have done for us.

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



Here's What We Do!

VRFPD
555 E. Bridge St.
Vernonia, OR 97064
503-429-8252

Rob Davis
Volunteer Recruitment & Retention
Vernonia Fire & Mist-Birkenfeld Fire
503-429-8252 (Vernonia)
503-755-2710 (Mist)

Calls responded to July 1-31

Fire	2
Emergency Medical Service	42
Hazardous Condition	0
Service Call	16
Good Intent	2
False Alarm	1
Total	63