

Summer EBT is Available

Thousands of Families Possibly Eligible

Having enough to eat is crucial for good health and well-being. Yet hunger is a persistent problem across the country and here in Oregon. Feeding America reports that 1 in 6 children in Oregon face hunger. To help children get the food they need to thrive, the Oregon State Legislature approved the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to offer Summer EBT this year.

With support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Summer EBT provides eligible families \$120 per child for groceries when school is out, and children lose access to food programs offered at schools. Thousands of families may be eligible for this new benefit and not know it.

Thirty-seven states, all five U.S. territories, and two tribes have committed to making Summer EBT available to kids and families in their communities this summer. This initiative is backed by a decade of demonstration projects and rigorous



Fariborz Pakseresht with Children (Photo Courtesy of Oregon Dept. of Human Services)

evaluation showing that it works to reduce child hunger and support healthier diets, including increased consumption of whole grains, dairy, fruits, and vegetables and decreased consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages. Summer EBT works in tandem with other nutrition programs like the USDA Summer Nutrition Programs, Summer Food Oregon and Oregon Food Bank's Food Finder.

At a July 17 media event, representatives from ODHS, ODE, the USDA, the

Boys and Girls Clubs of Salem, Marion, and Polk Counties and the Oregon Food Bank spoke to raise awareness about the new Summer EBT program. The Boys and Girls Clubs offer summer meals to children.

"Driven by the ongoing economic fallout of COVID-19, the end of pandemic safety nets and the rising cost of food and housing, we are in an ongoing hunger crisis," said Sammi Teo, Public Policy Advocate at the Oregon Food Bank. "Last year, we saw

1.9 million visits to food assistance sites through the Oregon Food Bank Network — a 14 percent increase from the previous year and a record number of visits. For families facing food insecurity, June has long marked a time when kids no longer have easy access to breakfast and lunch at school. Many parents and caregivers must come up with at least 10 additional meals per week, per child. Summer EBT helps bridge the hunger gap during the summer. By having Summer EBT on a card that families can use when grocery shopping, they can better accommodate dietary needs and cultural preferences.

"There are many people who still don't know about the program. There is a short window to apply, and there is a short window to use the benefits," said USDA FNS Western Region Administrator Jesus Mendoza, Jr. "While it's a new program nationwide, this program has been tested here in Oregon. We learned that this program does help address food insecurity for children during the summer months."

ODE Director Dr. Charlene Williams said, "Just like Summer Learning addresses unfinished learning between school years, accelerates academic

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Fire at Portland Metal Recycling Facility

Crew Fights Four-Alarm Fire

Portland Fire & Rescue responded to a reported fire at Radius Recycling affiliated with Schnitzer Steel with reports of a fire in a scrap metal pile on Wednesday, July 17. This large mixed metal pile filled with smashed cars, appliances, and other large metal objects was scheduled to go through the industrial shredder located adjacent to this large pile. The fire was eventually raised to a 4th alarm assignment with engines, trucks, fireboats, and other personnel from all over the city to address the large fire. Four hours after the first alarm was sent, the command officer considered the situation under control and called for a recall of the incident with all companies assigned to continue working. There were no reported injuries to responders or plant personnel.

The location of this incident was a dense industrial area in N. Portland to the east of the Willamette River with the property being bordered on the west and north by waterways. The large pile was showing signs of significant fire upon arrival and the command officer directed crews to prepare for a "surround and drown" operation where crews attach to a fire hydrant and pump to a ladder truck with their aerial ladders extended so 1200 to 2000 gpm of water can flow from the tips of these elevated nozzles and apply a large volume of water on the fire. Yard hydrants not affiliated the main city grid provided ample volume and pres-



Firefighter working at the pump panel of a fire engine (Photo Courtesy of Portland Fire & Rescue)

sure of water for all in use. In addition to using fire hydrants located on the property, two different fire boats were captained to the location and acted as a pumping vessel by pulling water directly from the river and into large diameter hose to aid in the water supply needed to suppress the fire.

Plant personnel assisted in reducing the size of the fuel pile by using large articulating claws to reach into the pile, pull out a full load and deposit it away from the burning material. To prevent fire spread, crews used handheld nozzles and directed the stream at each claw load

to prevent this new material from igniting the ever-growing spoil piles as the material was being relocated.

This type of a fire is heavy on the need for equipment and less intense on human operations and activity. The 4th alarm requested was to continue to have available tools and engines needed to access water and produce the pressures required to move the volume of water through all hose lines used to reduce the flames. With nearly 100 firefighters on scene, crews from across the city were strategically moved to best cover the city with compa-

nies traditionally operating out of Argay Heights in outer NE Portland relocated to the University Park Neighborhood. Additionally, there were stations on the periphery of the city staffed by members of our mutual aid partners from Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue aiding in the coverage of the SW part of town.

PF&R EOPS Division would like to recognize the work performed by the Emergency Vehicle Technicians and other PF&R Logistics Section personnel during this event. They responded to the scene to evaluate the working rigs to be certain the extended operation would be successful along with providing fuel for the apparatus in use and food for the personnel on scene. The EVT's are an essential, and often invisible, portion of our success day in and day out. Portland Fire would like to also thank the crews that responded to the fire from Vancouver Fire to help us at the location for the first few hours. Lastly, with 3 different fire channels being used at one point in this fire, PF&R would like to acknowledge the assistance provided by the emergency dispatch center in this greater alarm fire.

All water used in this incident was captured by the on-site water collection system which will capture the water, strain out the particulates, and run it through the on-site purification process reducing the concerns of contaminated run off entering the watershed. PF&R recommends that if you are within the any fire, that you close your windows and shelter in place to reduce the harmful effects of the smoke on your respiratory system.