

Former chief, city under fire for safety violations

By CINDY YINGST
The Columbia Press

The city expects results in mid-November from an investigation by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration into safety violations within the Warrenton Fire Department.

The investigation began in early August when an anonymous complaint was filed with the agency, City Manager Linda Engbretson said.

"I informed the commissioners, but it is an operational matter and not something the commission takes action on at this time," she said. "The investigator completed her investigation in mid-Sep-

Symphony kicks off 40th season

The North Coast Symphonic Band celebrates its 40th season with a series of four concerts at the Clatsop Community College Performing Arts Center, 588 16th St., Astoria.

The group's first concert of the season is at 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 27.

Warrenton schools music educator Michael McClure will be guest conductor and the afternoon will feature musicians' favorite selections from the last four decades.

General admission is \$15 or \$8 for students, which can be paid at the door. Doors open at 2:15 p.m. with a pre-show at 2:30 p.m.



Conductor Michael McClure

tember, which included interviews with me, several firefighters, our paid personnel and the chief."

There are six allegations:

- There is no safety committee and there are no safety meetings.
- Safety data sheets aren't maintained and updated, exposing firefighters to safety risks.
- Employees who respond to incidents don't have the required training, which puts other responders in danger.
- The fire chief responds to incidents without any personal protective equipment, putting other firefighters at



Demers

risk.

- Firefighters are exposed to respiratory hazards because the chief requires them to enter burning structures without protective equipment.
- Prescription medications that are ex-

pired or removed from service are stored in the chief's office without being locked up or controlled.

Chief Tim Demers submitted a two-sentence resignation letter dated Sept. 24 and effective Oct. 15. Retired former Fire Chief Ted Ames is filling the role until a new chief is hired.

"Any fines will be disap-

pointing," Engbretson said of the investigation. "We shall move forward and make corrections and improve our processes as appropriate. Safety of our personnel and volunteers is our No. 1 concern. We look forward to

implementing rectifications based on the results of the investigation.

"I am so appreciative of Chief Ames for providing his leadership as we move forward with recruitment."

Demers did not respond to requests for comment about his resignation.

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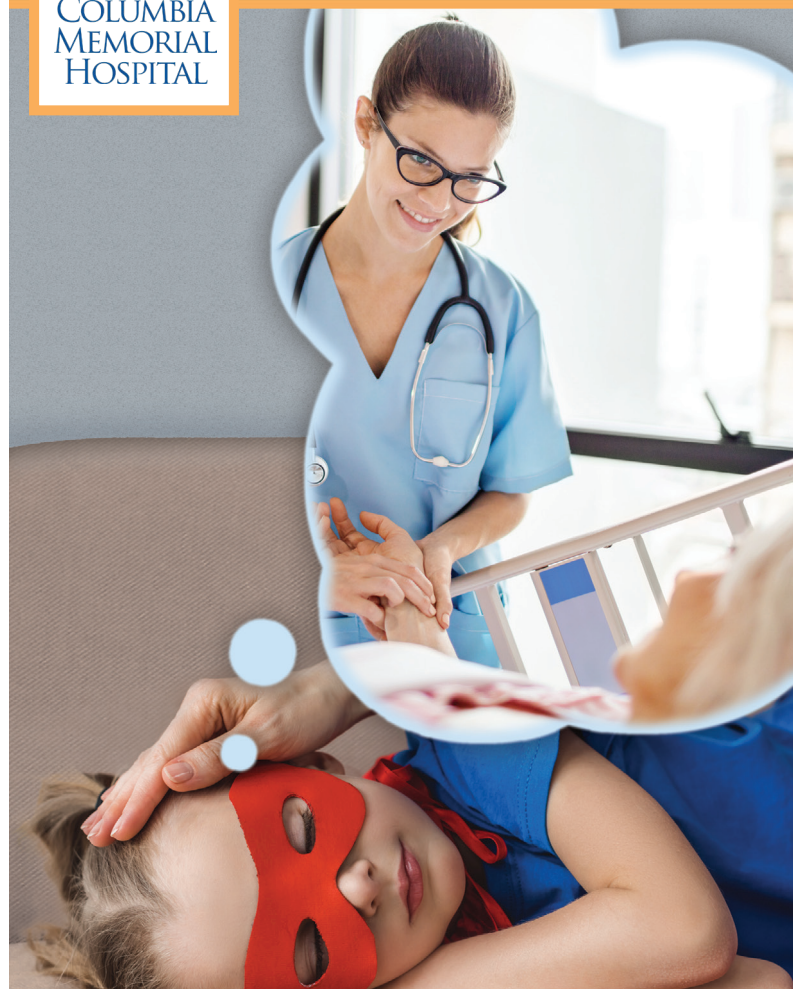
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