



Div. Chief David Rankin received an award for meritorious from the state fire marshal.

Seaside Fire adjusts to pandemic, call levels

SEEN FROM SEASIDE
R.J. MARX



The Seaside Fire Department handled a pandemic, wildfires and record levels of calls over the last two years.

Seaside Fire Chief Joey Daniels took a look back in his report to the City Council last Monday.

“2020, as everyone knows, was a very challenging year for all with the COVID-19 virus,” Daniels said. “COVID-19 created a serious challenge with our agency as we had to shut the station down to the public and figure out how to respond and keep personnel safe.”

Pandemic closures and extra precautions came at a time when the call volume continued to rise, while the West Coast suffered one of its worst fire seasons.

In 2019, 33 volunteers responded to 1,569 calls for service, just over 100 more calls than the previous year.

Even though call volume remained about the same as 2019, the pandemic altered operations and stretched resources.

“During the COVID-19 calls we also had to fully suit up in encapsulated suits during the beginning of the pandemic to keep our personnel safe,” Daniels said.

Firefighters have had to get used to wearing masks, learn how to quickly don full Tyvek suits on respiratory calls and hand out masks to the public, he said.

Normal calls that would have taken 30 minutes or less were now seeing more than 60 minutes of on-scene time for personal protective equipment requirements.

“This was a very challenging time to keep enough responders available because schools were closed, day cares were closed and people had to stay home and watch their children,” Daniels said.

Recruitment and prevention also came to a halt during the pandemic. The Oregon

State Fire Marshal’s office recommended that all fire safety inspections of businesses, unless requested, be halted due to the risk of infection.

“It’s a little hard to be inviting people in when nobody can come into the fire station,” Daniels said. “It’s a little tough for us.”

Seaside deployed firefighters to the most wildfires ever last year, Daniels said, assisting at two in California and five in Oregon.

The department also saw the departure of Chris Dugan, who left after 30 years to become the Clatsop County fire marshal.

The 2019 firefighter of the year, chosen by all fire officers, was Rick Plummer. The 2020 honor went to Jason Schermerhorn.

Div. Chief David Rankin received a medal of honor from the Oregon Fire Chiefs Association for saving a teenager who was stuck in rough water in the Pacific Ocean.

In late December 2019, the department received a report of a person pulled out in the ocean at the Necanicum Estuary and beach. Rankin was at home with his family when he received the call. A 17-year-old male was in rough water at least 300 yards out, but couldn’t make his way back. Rankin donned his wetsuit and with a rescue can, swam out to the last location to rescue or at least float the victim until the U.S. Coast Guard helicopter arrived to hoist them out. Withstanding heavy surf, he noticed the victim standing on what appeared to be some kind of a sandbar. With the victim holding onto the rescue can, Rankin swam the victim to the other side of the estuary and beach.

Gearhart Fire was there to meet him and drove the victim up to the beach approach so paramedics could transport him. Rankin was asked by Gearhart Fire personnel if he needed a lift back to Seaside, but decide to swim back to the other side.

“That was a unique incident,” Rankin said. “But it’s you know, even though this was awarded to me, it’s really the whole team effort of our department, Gearhart,



City of Seaside

Chris Dugan received the retirement award for his years of fire service. He is now the fire marshal for Clatsop County.

YEARS	# INCIDENTS	% CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS YEAR
2010	778	-22%
2011	848	8%
2012	959	12%
2013	958	0%
2014	1140	15.96%
2015	1155	1%
2016	1329	13.09%
2017	1495	11%
2018	1455	-3%
2019	1569	7%
2020	1562	-0%

Seaside Fire

Ten-year call volume of Seaside Fire Department calls.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A thank you to baseball, softball volunteers

To the Editor:
I would like to acknowledge the volunteers who have worked extremely hard to bring youth baseball and softball to the kids

in this community.
Thanks to Seaside Kids, who has sponsored and supported kids in this community for years. Special shout out to John Morris, who has unselfishly for a lot of years given time and care for this great program.
Also, to head coaches Brett Wolfe and

Jessica Garrigues who have given so many hours to working with kids, and running programs for the benefit of this community.
To all the sponsors of Seaside Kids, thank you.
To all the parents who help run concession stands and especially Kayla Boucher

and Ashlee Klumper.
We are always in need of volunteers. Field maintenance, umpiring, concession stands, coaching. Thank you to all that have helped make this season great.
Wally Hamer
Seaside Kids

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Contact local agencies for latest meeting information and attendance guidelines.

MONDAY, JUNE 28
Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., 989 Broadway,

cityofseaside.us.
TUESDAY, JUNE 29
Gearhart City Council, work session, 6:30 p.m., cityofgearhart.com.

TUESDAY, JULY 6
Seaside Community Center Commission, 10 a.m., 1225 Avenue A.
Seaside Library Board of Directors, 4:30 p.m.,

1131 Broadway St.
WEDNESDAY, JULY 7
Seaside Improvement Commission, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.



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