

# Flash Point

## LANE FIRE AUTHORITY

### Fall/Winter 2020



### What’s Inside this Edition of *Flash Point*

•In just a matter of days, Oregonians will begin receiving their ballots for the November 3, 2020 general election. Without a doubt, this year’s election cycle has been full of controversy and division. However, LFA has faith in our taxpayers that personal political preferences will not cloud their decisions when it comes to issues that affect them. Among those is Lane Fire Authority asking our voters to approve a five-year, 50 cents per thousand, property tax increase to help us improve the staffing and equipment at our fire stations.

•Oregon has just gone through a historic fire season that has seen entire communities devastated. A crew from Lane Fire Authority helped fight the Holiday Farm Fire which extended for miles along the McKenzie River valley. An account of their experiences begins on page 2.

•On page 14 you will find our 2020-2021 Burn Permit. The permit is for those of you who can legally burn backyard waste. We ask that you carefully read the information on the permit and have a copy in your possession when you are burning.

•Other features found in the Fall-Winter edition of *Flash Point* include: a special message from Chief Dale Borland, the history of the Alvadore Rural Fire Protection District, a summary of the fire districts that came together to form Lane Fire Authority, both by Dr. Fred Scalise, a check list of fall and winter safety tips, and the latest developments in Lane Fire Authority. As always, we hope you find *Flash Point* both interesting and informative.



### November 3, 2020 Ballot Lane Fire Authority Asks Voters to Increase Fire Service Budget

Lane Fire Authority is asking its voters to increase the fire district’s budget for a period of five years beginning with fiscal year 2021-2022. It is the first time in the history of Lane Fire Authority and its predecessor fire districts that such a request has been made.

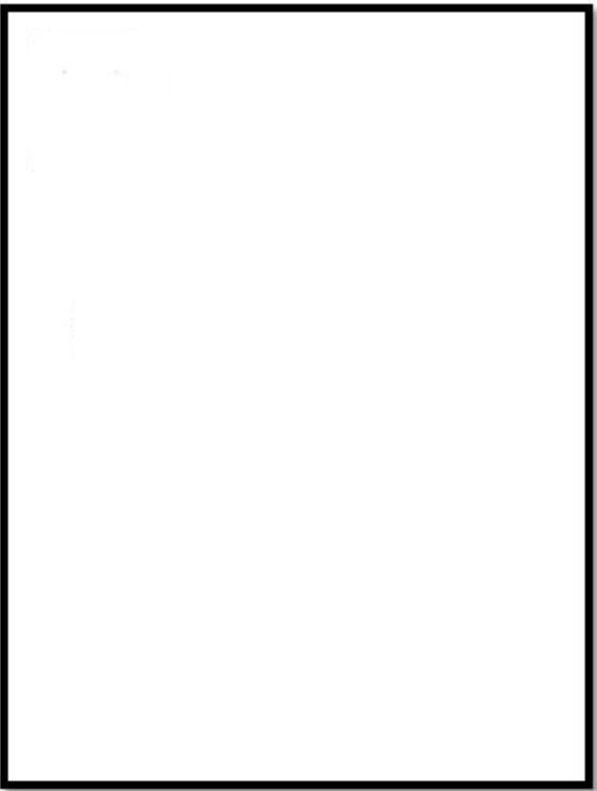
#### Why is my fire district asking for this?

In 4 years, our call volume has increased by 28% from 4,799 calls in 2015 to 6,156 calls in 2019 (see the chart below). In each of these years, Lane Fire Authority has seen an average increase of 339 calls per year. Yet, our paid and volunteer staffing has remained essentially the same.

This has made it difficult to consistently respond to calls in a timely manner, particularly when we receive multiple calls at or near the same time. LFA works very hard to maintain a high level of service, but the increasing number of calls and additional costs related to staffing and expenses have made it harder and harder to maintain that level of service

LFA Four Year Increase in Call Volume

Year	Calls	Increase	% Increase
2015	4799	-	
2016	5090	291	6.06%
2017	5258	168	3.30%
2018	5837	579	1.01%
2019	6156	319	5.47%



Total four-year increase: 1357 = 28.28%

Average increase per year: 339 calls

#### How will the additional funds be used?

- Hire three additional personnel to staff a response vehicle full-time.
- Meet the increasing costs associated with the day-to-day maintenance and replacement of aging equipment.
- More effectively respond to emergencies.

#### How much will it cost and how will it affect my taxes?

Fifty cents for every \$1000 dollars of your assessed property’s value would be added to the existing permanent rate for a period of 5 years. For example, a home with a value of \$100,000 would pay an additional \$50 per year or \$4.17 a month. For a more complete picture, see the table below:

Assessed Property	Annual	Monthly Cost
\$100,000.00	\$50.00	\$4.17
\$200,000.00	\$100.00	\$8.33
\$300,000.00	\$150.00	\$12.50
\$400,000.00	\$200.00	\$16.67

#### Where can I find more information?

See our website [www.lanefire.org](http://www.lanefire.org). Fire Chief Dale Borland is also available to answer questions at (541) 935-2226, ext. 203, or email him at:

[daleborland@lanefire.org](mailto:daleborland@lanefire.org).

## A Message from Chief Dale Borland

On the November 3, 2020 general election ballot, you will see a request from Lane Fire Authority asking our voters to approve an increase in our operating budget for a period of five years. What is significant about this request? It is the first time in the history of Lane Fire Authority and its two former departments, Lane County Fire District #1 and Lane Rural Fire/Rescue where we have had to ask our voters for an increase in the funding dedicated to the operation of the district.



We firmly believe in being good stewards of the financial support we receive from our taxpayers. With this in mind, we weighed our options carefully before placing an operational levy on this November's ballot. As can be read on page 1 in an article titled, *November 3, 2020 Ballot Lane Fire Authority Asks Voters to Increase Fire Service Budget*, we discuss our need for additional funding and what we hope to accomplish.

Oregon has gone through the most devastating fire season in over thirty years. Although we had rain during the last week and a half of September, that does not mean fire season is over. The state has experienced weather conditions usually associated with California – hot, very dry days, humidity in the single digits, and winds blowing from the east to the west. This volatile combination caused fires to rapidly spread, sweeping down valley floors and destroying countless structures and even whole communities. Those conditions could easily return as we move into October and we must remain vigilant. Throughout the widespread emergencies in September, the number one priority for all involved agencies has been life safety.

In early and mid-September, Lane Fire Authority had a spate of field and brush fires that could have easily turned into major conflagrations. Fortunately, thanks to quick and cooperative action by crews from Lane Fire Authority, Eugene/Springfield Fire and Western Lane Oregon Department of Forestry, these fires were quickly extinguished. Had the weather been more severe and had there been a delay in response, any one of these fires could have swept across large portions of our district.

Lane Fire Authority will remain vigilant and hopes that by October the weather pattern will cool down and the rain will return in earnest. Meanwhile, we remain ready to respond to the needs of our patrons and support the surrounding fire districts.

As I write this editorial, a crew of men and women from Lane Fire Authority have just returned from the Holiday Farm Fire, just one of many large fires that have displaced thousands of Oregonians and have obliterated entire communities. Stan Turner interviewed four of the LFA firefighters who helped fight the Holiday Farm Fire. A summary of their experiences can be found in the next article, *LFA Sends Firefighters and Apparatus to the Holiday Farm Fire*.

On other matters affecting Lane Fire Authority, we continue to operate within the COVID-19 guidelines. This means that on calls and among the general public, we will be wearing facemasks. Aside from what the state has mandated, wearing facemasks is for the safety of our patrons and our responders.

I am proud of the members of Lane Fire Authority and the training they have been receiving from their officers. Thanks to Captain Rose Douglass and Lieutenant Casey Papè, who manage our Training Department, we have been able to practice appropriate social distancing while continuing to enhance the skills of our responders.

I want to thank the members our community for their support, good wishes and constructive suggestions for improving our services. As our motto clearly states: We are “*Dedicated to Service*” which means we continually strive to do our very best in serving the public.

If you have questions related to our operational levy or other matters and concerns related to Lane Fire Authority, please feel free to contact me either by email ([daleborland@lanefire.org](mailto:daleborland@lanefire.org)) or phone (541-935-2226).



## LFA Sends Firefighters and Apparatus to the Holiday Farm Fire

By Stan Turner

*The following article chronicles the first three days of Lane Fire Authority's contributions of personnel and apparatus to the McKenzie River's Holiday Farm Fire. It represents a very small glimpse into the efforts made by the hundreds of men and woman of multiple fire agencies as they launched rescue and fire suppression operations. This fire will burn for months, as will the massive fires throughout western Oregon. Only the winter rains will bring full extinguishment.*

During the first week in September 2020, the National Weather Service began forecasting the possibility of a significant weather event. Western Oregon was experiencing another year of drought and conditions were ripe for a major fire. On Sunday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, the middle of Labor Day weekend, Coburg Fire Chief and Lane Fire Defense Board Chief Chad Minter held a telephone conference with the fire chiefs of agencies in Lane County. They agreed they needed to prepare for the possibility of a major incident that would lead a fire department to request mutual aid assistance from surrounding agencies.

Lane County's fire departments pride themselves on being prepared for large emergencies. Lane Fire Authority, under the direction of Dale Borland, is no exception. Every fire season, LFA designates crews and apparatus that are ready to rapidly respond if assistance is requested for mutual aid and/or a conflagration declaration by the State of Oregon.

Immediately after Chief Minter's telephone conference with the fire chiefs, Dale Borland contacted LFA personnel who were designated as out-of-district responders for the week of September 6 to 12. They were told to be ready, that the conditions were ripe for a major fire, not only in Lane County but in much of the state.

On, Monday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, the National Weather Service issued a “Red Flag” warning for both Oregon and Washington. The warning for Lane County, Oregon, stated:



**Red Flag Warning in Lane County, Oregon**  
*Issued by the National Weather Service*

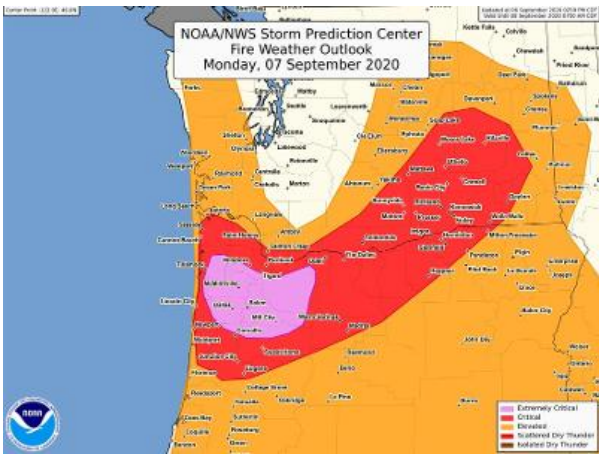
9/7/2020 2:39:00 PM until 9/9/2020 8:00:00 PM

A Red Flag Warning means that critical fire weather conditions are either occurring now, or will shortly. A combination of the above conditions can contribute to extreme fire behavior.

**Alert Summary**

HISTORIC SEPTEMBER EAST WIND EVENT EXPECTED THROUGH TUESDAY...  
...EXTREMELY DRY CONDITIONS LIKELY TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY...  
...DRY AND UNSTABLE CONDITIONS POSSIBLE THURSDAY...  
...RED FLAG WARNING REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL 8 PM PDT WEDNESDAY FOR WIND AND LOW RELATIVE HUMIDITY FOR FIRE WEATHER ZONES 605 AND 606... \* Affected Area... In Oregon...  
- Fire Weather Zone 605 North Oregon Cascade Foothills, and - Fire Weather Zone 606 Central Oregon Cascade Foothills. \* Winds...East 20 to 30 mph with gusts up to 50 mph.

Gusts up to 60 mph across exposed terrain north of the Santiam River. Strongest winds expected Monday night into Tuesday. \* Relative Humidity...As low as 5 percent. Poor overnight humidity recoveries. \* Impacts...Conditions may be favorable for rapid fire spread which may threaten life and property. Use extra caution with potential ignition sources, especially in grassy areas. Outdoor burning is not recommended.



Monday evening, a little before 8:20 pm, a fire broke out near the small community of Rainbow, located to the west of McKenzie Bridge. The fire quickly spread, fanned by hot, dry winds coming out of the east that had gusting speeds over fifty miles per hour. It was an unprecedented weather event.

The Upper McKenzie Fire Department, led by Chief Christiana Plews, was the first agency to respond and was soon overwhelmed by the immensity of the fire and how fast it was spreading. Realizing how dangerous the fire had become, she issued a Level 3 (“Get out now!”) evacuation order, without a doubt saving many lives. She also issued a plea for mutual aid, and fire agencies throughout Lane County began to respond.

During those early hours of the fire, a number of the Upper McKenzie firefighters, including their chief, lost their homes as well as their fire station at Blue River.

It was about 10:30 pm when Cole Webster got a call from LFA Chief Dale Borland. He was told to report to the Veneta Fire Station, join Dean Chappell and Jon Jasper and collectively take LFA’s Heavy Brush 101 from the Veneta Fire Station. Casey Pape and Justin Ferguson were contacted and told to staff Brush 115, housed at LFA’s Prairie Road station. Chief Borland, who had extensive experience as a leader and director in major conflagrations, would assume the responsibility of guiding the responding apparatus. They were headed to what would soon be known as the Holiday Farm Fire.

By midnight, while the Lane Fire Authority crews were in route, the fire was already sweeping west down the McKenzie River Valley and expanding up the hills on either side. Residents, some unaware of the advancing flames until their homes were on fire, had to evacuate as quickly as possible.

By the time Chief Borland and the LFA crews passed through Springfield and headed up Highway 126 through Waltherville, there were apparatus behind them from multiple Lane County agencies including: Coburg, Dexter, Eugene/Springfield, Goshen/Pleasant Hill, Junction City, Lorane, Lowell, McKenzie, Mohawk Valley, Siuslaw and South Lane. Also responding were crews and apparatus from the Oregon Department of Forestry. Their primary assignment was to get to the community of Blue River as quickly as possible. Their tasks included securing a safe area for people who were not able to evacuate further down Highway 126, conduct rescue operations, and where possible, protect structures, particularly McKenzie High School.



When the responding agencies reached Leaburg, the glow of the fire was clearly visible and the road was covered by debris. Winds gusting up to 50 and 60

miles per hour were blowing in all directions.

Beyond Leaburg, just before Finn Rock, the road was blocked by downed trees. Chief Borland ordered several crews to

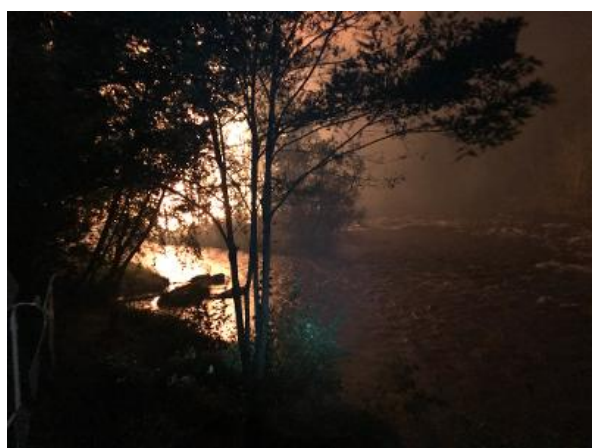


begin clearing the road. As the line of responders moved further east, they began to encounter fire, often on both sides of the road. Literally everything was on fire: trees, brush, structures and vehicles. LFA Fire Marshal Dean Chappell, remembered how frustrated and sad he was, going by one burning structure after another. Throughout his career as a volunteer and paid firefighter, he had been trained to fight and extinguish fires. Now, he could do nothing but drive by and witness the devastation.



They passed fully involved buildings and several burning cars abandoned on the highway. Jon Jasper, who had been riding in Heavy Brush 101 in the front “officer’s seat”, vividly remembered what happened next. He had been listening to the nearly constant chatter on the fire engine’s radio. Many of the transmissions were from the 911 Dispatch Center which relayed pleas for help from people trapped in and around their homes. Then the engine’s radio suddenly went silent. Soon after, the crew on Heavy Brush 101 was asked to





help cut and remove trees blocking the road. While working on this assignment, Jon was informed there was no cell service or communication with 911 Dispatch. He, along with the other responders, came to realize the fire had compromised critical communication by damaging radio and cell phone towers and associated equipment. Only direct “line-of-sight” radio communication was now possible, which was limited in reach and greatly challenged by the terrain.

The responding agencies finally made it to the junction of Highway 126 and the road to Blue River. They were met there by Chief Chad Minter, who had driven to the area earlier that night. He divided the crews into groups, each given specific assignments that primarily focused on rescue and life protection. By this time, the fire had been given a name, the Holiday Farm Fire.

One of the first and most important assignments was helping maintain a safety zone for those who had escaped the advancing fire. More than fifty residents had been unable to evacuate on Highway 126 because it had been blocked by fire and downed trees. Personnel from Upper McKenzie Fire had previously set up the area, which was located near McKenzie High School. The safe zone provided adequate refuge from the fire. The addition of personnel and apparatus, in tandem with Upper McKenzie Fire, provided an added layer of security for those who had sought refuge.

The second task was protecting McKenzie High School from the encroaching fire. The bleachers at both the track and football fields were lost, as well as a few outbuildings, but the assigned crews were able to save the school itself.

Other tasks during the frantic hours of early Tuesday were to search for people still trapped as well as attempt to prevent the fire from burning more homes. Both assignments were very difficult. It was still dark and with the intense smoke, fire and falling trees it

was nearly impossible to see hazards and safely move about.

In those early hours of Tuesday morning, September 8<sup>th</sup>, the responders learned that they were trapped. More trees, many now on fire, had come down, once again blocking Highway 126. Fortunately, they and the evacuees were not in imminent danger.

Tuesday morning, when there was enough light to pick out hazards, efforts began in earnest to clear roads, gain access to structures, search for people in need of rescue, and try to prevent the further loss of homes and businesses. This became the routine for the remainder of the week.

The rescue crews also began caring for livestock and other animals that had survived the fire. Hay was found for horses and cattle. Efforts were made to find secure pastures. Fences were repaired. West on Highway 126 at Leaburg, the dam had been opened to drain Leaburg Lake in anticipation of large flows of debris. Doing so emptied the ponds at the Leaburg Fish Hatchery and stranded a number of large, old sturgeon. An engine crew from Eugene/Springfield Fire found the sturgeon in a few inches of water, barely alive. Each day they and other task forces sprayed water into the nearly empty pond to keep the sturgeon from dying.



Back at the fire scene, a common challenge for the firefighters was the lack of safe access to structures. Narrow roads and overgrown brush made it difficult, if not impossible to reach many homes. If access could be made, the other major difficulty was the absence of a defensible space around structures. Trees and other vegetation right next to a house, rain gutters filled with needles and leaves, flammable objects close by, all were factors in fire quickly spreading to homes and other buildings. While these were all factors that might have prevented a structure from burning, particularly when the fire spread slowed down, the reality was that during the periods of high wind, no amount of

preparation could have saved these structures.

It wasn't until late afternoon on Tuesday that a relief crew arrived in the Blue River area. Highway 126 had finally been cleared, and residents who had been blocked from escaping were able to leave the safety zone and make their way to refugee centers that had been set up near Springfield.

Most of the original first responders had been awake for more than thirty-six hours. Leaving the Blue River area, they traveled down to Thurston Middle School, where they were fed and given the opportunity to sleep for a few hours. They were also informed that aside from the crews that had relieved them, no additional help would be coming. Massive fires had broken out all over western Oregon and there were no more resources available. Consequently, these original responders were only able to rest for a few hours and were then sent back to work a twelve-hour night shift.

Starting Tuesday evening, the Holiday Farm Fire rescue and protection efforts settled into a daily schedule. There were two shifts, day and night, each twelve hours in length and mostly made up of crews from Lane County fire departments. There were two main tasks: search for and rescue remaining survivors, and when possible, prevent fire from encroaching on unburned structures.

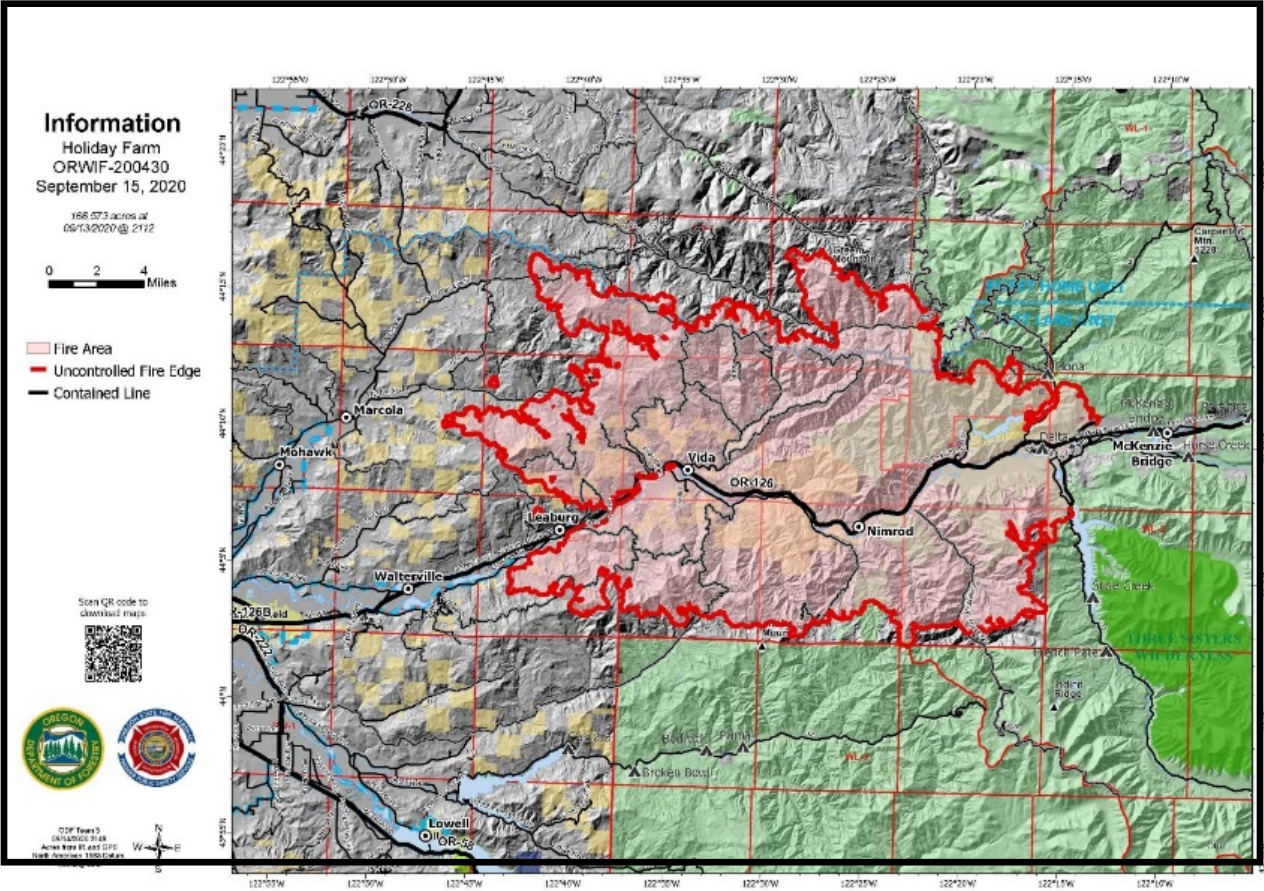
As the pace became less frenetic, the firefighters on scene had time to think about the enormity of this fire and its impact on so many small communities. Gone was the beauty and tranquility of the McKenzie River Highway, replaced by blackened ground, gaunt and fallen skeletons of trees, and mile after mile of destroyed homes, businesses and burned out vehicles. For LFA Lt. Casey Pape, it was overwhelming. He had grown up spending summers at a family cabin in the McKenzie River Valley. It was emotionally it very difficult for him to take in everything he saw while working on the fire. Captain Katy Johnson summed up what she observed in one descriptive and powerful word, “*devastating*”. Cole Webster noted how quickly a community could lose everything but come together in spite of great loss.

This chapter in the history of Lane Fire Authority is far from over. At the time this article was written, the LFA crews had returned home. Many had been working on the fire for a week and a



half. It is possible they could be called back to this fire or dispatched to other fires in the state. It all depends on the weather.

It is clear that the cooperation and Herculean efforts of the responding Lane County fire departments helped make a difference in a terrible and tragic event. It is good to know these same agencies would respond to a request for aid from Lane Fire Authority, should the need ever arise.



### A Summary of the Data from the Holiday Farm Fire as of September 23, 2020:

- Acres covered: 173,094
- Over 260 mile parameter
- Containment at 22%.
- 985 people are working to put out the fire.
- 1273 structures have been inspected in the fire zone.
- 431 homes destroyed,
- Nine homes were marked as “failed,”
- 24 non-residential commercial structures destroyed..
- 434 of 1273 homes had no damage.
- One person confirmed deceased.

### Some of the Lessons for LFA Residents from the Holiday Farm Fire

LFA Fire Marshal, Dean Chappell, came away with the following observations:

The strong and erratic winds during the first day of the fire made it impossible to save many homes, businesses and other structures.

Once the fire settled down and firefighters were able to slow its spread, many of the structures saved had in common some or all of the following:

- A defensible space had been cleared around the structure. (The recommendation is a 30’ perimeter with everything cleared, trees limbed up and nothing hanging over the house, plus within a 100’ perimeter brush should be thinned.)
- Emergency vehicles could easily access the structure, not hampered by trees, limbs, brush, narrow access and the inability of apparatus to turn around.

Dean Chappell also stressed the importance of preplanning for any type of emergency that leads to a rapid evacuation:

- Every family member should be familiar with several escape routes.
- A safe place for family members to meet should be established.
- Be aware that cell service and other electronic forms of communication may be lost.
- Have a “To Go Bag” with items such as medication, a change of clothes, and copies of important documents. (One suggestion is to store documents, family pictures, and a photo record of possessions on a “thumb drive” which can easily be put into the “To Go Bag.”
- Assemble a survival kit that includes energy bars, bottled water, blankets, a first aid kit, a flashlight and food for pets.
- Place the “To Go Bag” and Survival Kit in a location easily accessible, preferably close to an exit from the house.

*The following articles reinforce the lessons from the Holiday Farm Fire and include additional suggestions for preparedness.*

### 2020-2021 Winter Safety Check List

Each year we publish a Winter Safety Check List as an aid in helping you keep your home and family free from harm. Please take a few moments to review this list and take action where needed.

- ☐ **Woodstove, Pellet Stove, Fire Place:** If you use a fireplace, wood stove or pellet stove, have the flue cleaned annually (more frequently if you have to burn “green” or wet wood). One of our most frequent calls in the winter is for flue fires caused by creosote buildup in chimneys and stove pipes. Such fires can readily move into walls, ceilings, and attics.
- ☐ **Smoke Alarms:** Check your **smoke alarms** monthly. If possible, vacuum dust from the face and vents. Press the test buttons to make sure they are functioning. Alarms that are ten years or older should be replaced with new units (some new smoke alarms are required by law to have batteries that last ten years). You should have a smoke alarm in every sleeping area on every floor. If you have smoke alarms that are wired into the house electrical system, change the backup battery at least once per year.



- ☐ **Home Escape Plan:** Develop a home escape plan – every family member should know two ways out of every room and a safe place to meet outside. Practice your escape plan at least twice a year and make sure your smoke alarms are loud enough to wake up the occupants of your house.
- ☐ **Portable Electric Heaters:** Make sure all your electric portable heaters have 36 inches of empty space around them and are attached directly to an outlet. Never use extension cords with portable heaters. Your heater should have a “tip over switch” which shuts the heater off if it falls over. Check the heater’s electric cord for frays or cracks, and while the heater is on, feel the cord to see if it is getting hot. The cords should never have anything on or over them. Overheated cords are a common cause of fire. Never use kerosene heaters, barbecues, charcoal grills or camp stoves indoors as they can produce carbon monoxide, a deadly odorless and colorless gas.
- ☐ **Extension Cords:** Inspect all appliance cords for cracks and frays. Never run extension cords under rugs or furniture. Do not use extension cords for appliances drawing heavy amounts of current. Make sure the cord can handle the amount of current demanded by the appliance.
- ☐ **Electrical Outlets:** Make sure electrical outlets are not overloaded. Outlet extenders that allow multiple connections to one outlet can easily lead to overloading.
- ☐ **Cooking:** Always be cautious when cooking. Stove-caused fires and burns are more frequent in the winter months. Use a lid to extinguish grease fires – never use water!
- ☐ **Candles:** Never leave burning candles unattended. Use sturdy fire-proof candle holders. Make sure all candles are away from flammable material. Try using “flameless” candles. They are scented and flicker just like a real candle.
- ☐ **Holiday Lights:** Use UL-approved holiday lights, check them for damaged cords and broken bulbs, and be careful not to overload circuits—don’t connect more than three strings on a single line. Use small “twinkle” lights or LEDs. They use less electricity and are much cooler.
- ☐ **Christmas Tree:** If you buy a tree for the holidays, make sure it is fresh (the needles should be deep-green and flexible) and water it daily—a tree can use more than a gallon of water per day!
- ☐ **Holiday Decorations:** Keep holiday decorations away from candles, holiday lights, and other heat sources. If at all possible, holiday decorations should be non-combustible or flame resistant. In homes with small

children, take special care to avoid decorations that are small, sharp or breakable. Avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food as children might try to eat them.

- ☐ **Gas/Propane Appliances:** If you have propane appliances, make sure they are properly vented. Know the location of the supply valve. If you smell propane, do not operate any switches. Evacuate your home and call 911 from a portable phone.
- ☐ **Flammable Liquids:** Store flammable liquids in tightly sealed containers, placed in a well-vented area away from your home. Use all gas powered tools and equipment out-of-doors and make sure they have cooled down before refilling or storing them.
- ☐ **Carbon Monoxide Detectors:** Install a carbon monoxide alarm if you use propane, have wood-fueled appliances in your home, or have an attached garage.
- ☐ **Fire Safety for Children:** Teach your children that fire is a tool adults use for cooking and heating, not a toy to play with. Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
- ☐ **Make Backup Copies of Your Personal Documents and Photos:** Use your computer and a scanner to copy precious family photos and important documents (deeds, birth certificates, passports, credit card numbers, key phone numbers, etc.). Transfer the scanned items onto a CD or DVD and place the disc in a safe deposit box or give copies to trusted friends or relatives. You can also have your photos transferred to discs at many photo outlets.
- ☐ **Assemble an Emergency Cache:** During the winter months, heavy winds, flooding, and snow, often accompanied by lengthy power outages, could isolate you and your family for several days. Assemble an “emergency cache” of food and drinking water that could sustain your family for three to four days. Also, make sure that you have extra blankets or sleeping bags, a first aid kit, a working flashlight, and a portable radio plus spare batteries.

## The Essential Guide to Surviving a Power Outage

**The only thing scarier than the lights going out is not being prepared for it.**

Weather-related power outages have more than doubled since 2003 and the power outages that many of our patrons have experienced during the recent high-

fire-danger period have added to both inconvenience and anxiety.

Initially a power outage can lead to a sense of excitement and adventure, but once it extends beyond 30 minutes to an hour, we become increasingly aware of not only the inconvenience, but the need to rely on preparedness.

Below are suggestions on what you can do to be prepared before and during the power outage:

### BEFORE THE POWER OUTAGE:



**Assemble and maintain an emergency kit:** What should be in it? Items might include a hand-crank or battery-powered radio, flashlights, a first aid kit (with gauze, tape, bandages, antibiotic ointment, aspirin, blankets, non-latex gloves, scissors, hydrocortisone, thermometer, tweezers, and an instant cold compress), extra batteries, a whistle, hand sanitizer, garbage bags, and a tool kit. Keep the items in one easy-to-access plastic container.

**Fill your car with gas:** Fuel pumps run using electricity. Unless a service station has a backup generator, it will be unable to dispense fuel during a power outage. It is suggested that you make a habit of keeping your vehicle’s fuel tank at least half full and if there is advance warning of an impending storm, to fill it up completely.

If you have a backup generator, you will want to have extra fuel on hand. However, it needs to be stored safely; in an approved container and located away from your home and heat sources.

**Stock up on food and water:** Forget bread and milk; what you really need is enough nonperishable food and water to last at least three days. A rule of thumb is to have one gallon of water per person per day. Because you may be unable to cook, you might consider having food items such as tuna in cans or pouches, peanut butter, and granola bars. Further, don’t forget to have plenty of food on hand for your pets.

**Fill the bathtub with water:** If your home uses a well or relies on electricity to pump water, you will probably be without a ready source of water. You can go without showering for a while, but you’ll still need to use the toilet. Most modern toilets provide you with one or two flushes before the tank is out of water. If you have a bath tub full of water, you can use a bucket to dump



water into the tank or directly into the toilet to flush away waste.

**Get cash:** ATMs and credit card machines need electricity to work. If supermarkets or convenience stores are actually open during an outage, having cash makes it more likely you will be able to purchase needed food and other supplies.

**Know your risks:** Assess where you live and why you have had a power outage. Unless there is an immediate threat to you and your home, it may be wisest to stay where you are.

## DURING THE STORM

**Don't rely on candles:** Candles use a flame for light and may set a calming mood during a power outage, but they are not recommended due to risk of fire. Use flashlights to light your way instead and keep on hand a good supply of fresh batteries. In addition to powering flashlights, they can also be used to run portable radios.

**Be smart about generators:** Portable generators can safely power important electrical equipment like freezers, refrigerators, lighting, and more. However, they can also be very hazardous. Never use a generator indoors. Only run a generator outside. They emit carbon monoxide, an odorless, colorless gas that can quickly buildup indoors and lead to death. Read and follow the manufacturer's guidelines before operating the generator and never use it inside your home.

Even with your generator outside, be sure to have battery-powered carbon monoxide detectors in your home. In addition, when it comes time to refuel a generator, let it cool for at least two minutes before refilling it. Gasoline and its vapors are extremely flammable.

**Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed:** This helps food stay at the appropriate temperature longer. Food should be safe as long as the power is out for no more than four hours. If your refrigerator is in your garage and the weather has been below 40 degrees, food can be kept at a safe temperature longer. If the weather is below freezing, a closed refrigerator can help prevent the contents from freezing.

If the power outage extends for several days or longer, discard any perishable foods (like meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy and leftovers) that have been above 40 degrees for over two hours. Never taste food to determine its safety.

If you have warning of an impending storm that may cause a power outage, think about filling containers with water and place them in your freezer. They can then be used both as an aid to keeping food cold in your refrigerator and if kept in the freezer can help you determine if the freezer has defrosted.

**Unplug everything:** Turn off or disconnect appliances and electronics that were in use when the power went out. The power might return with momentary surges or spikes that can damage the equipment. However, leave at least one light on so that you know when the power returns.

**If you can, stay inside and keep informed:** As previously mentioned, unless you are faced with an immediate threat, it is best to stay at home. Use a battery powered or hand-cranked radio to stay informed.

If you need to contact others, keep in mind that cell phones have batteries that will need to be recharged using an outlet in your car or by generator. Further, they may not function at all as cell towers rely on electricity. If you still have a "landline" (hardwired telephone) it is possible that it may still be useable, since it usually uses an independent power source.

**Stock up on board and card games, good books and other diversions:** Be aware that in a power outage, being able to use the Internet, accessing Facebook and other social media, as well as watching television and videos is not going to happen without a source of electricity. Plan ahead with alternative activities. If you are with others, it may be an excellent time to rediscover direct interaction . . . for many a lost art in the time of electronics.

## Flue Fire Prevention

By  
Dean Chappell, LFA Fire Marshall

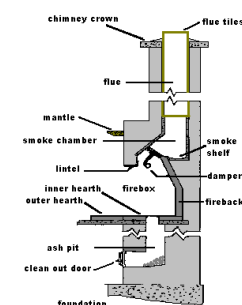
During the winter months, flue (chimney) fires are among our most frequent calls, with some leading to major house fires. Flue fires are the product of creosote buildup within the chimney. When creosote ignites, it often burns with an alarming "roar" and intense heat that can damage the flue/chimney. Chimneys made out of brick or masonry can crack and significantly degrade, opening spaces for hot gases and flame to travel into attics and walls. Extremely hot metal stove pipes can



warp, separate at the seams and rust rapidly, and like masonry chimneys, can allow hot gases and flame to travel into walls and attics.

**If you have a fire in your chimney:** Get everyone out of the house, as fire can spread with incredible speed. Call 9-1-1 from a safe distance using your cell phone or from a neighbor's house. Do not try to put out the fire by pouring or spraying water down the chimney. The sudden change in temperature can further degrade the chimney. After a flue fire, DO NOT continue using the fire place or wood stove. Call a chimney service professional to clean and inspect the chimney as well as assess the damage. Your chimney may need to be repaired and possibly relined to make it safe for further use. Be aware that chimney renovation can be expensive. The costs may be covered by your insurance company, but it would be wise to check with your agent.

## The anatomy of a flue fire:



### *Masonry Flue found on many wood stoves*

## What is creosote and where does it come from?

Heated wood releases hydrocarbon gases. When these get hot enough (about 1100 degrees F) they mix with air and catch fire. When hearth or woodstove fires smolder, unburned gases condense and deposit on the stovepipes and the flue as runny acids and liquid tars that harden into creosote. Both a cool flue and steam from green or wet wood encourage creosote buildup.

Creosote can appear as any of the following;

- a sooty powder
- a gummy mess
- a hard glaze
- or a deposit that looks like burnt marshmallows.

A creosote fire can burn with such blast-furnace intensity that it sets off this frightening chain of events: Crumbling and cracking mortar, balls of flaming creosote shooting out of the chimney top and onto the roof, clay-tile flue-liners cracking open, stainless steel liners warping, buckling and separating at the seams, masonry in the chimney



expanding with such force that sections of the chimney blow out, flames possibly spreading to the structure or roof of the house (The wood framing in your house doesn't necessarily need to be in direct contact with fire in order to ignite, it just needs air, oxygen and enough heat.)

A house may survive the first chimney fire, but the intense heat has started pyrolyzing\* nearby combustibles, thus lowering their ignition temperature. This makes the structure very vulnerable to a subsequent chimney fire. A fire damaged flue liner can no longer safely protect either the chimney or the house.

\*What is *Pyrolysis*: Pyrolysis is chemical decomposition caused by heat. Severely pyrolyzed wood can ignite at only 212 degrees F, while it would normally have a catch-fire temperature of about 500 degrees F, before it had any exposure to intense heat.

**Excessive creosote build-up is caused by one or more of the following:**

***A flue too big for the appliance it serves.***

Most open fireplace flues are too big to be used to vent a woodburning stove or a fireplace insert without a liner. This causes a sluggish flue-draft effect where gases expand to try and fill the space then cool down too quickly, allowing creosote to deposit on the chimney walls, where it sticks much like thick glue.



**Solution:** Install a stainless steel liner that is properly sized for the stove or fireplace insert. A liner is required by many building codes when installing a fireplace insert in an open fireplace.

***Poor woodburning habits***, such as severely limiting the air supply in a stove to achieve an all-night burn can cause a sluggish draft and a smoldering fire that doesn't get hot enough to burn the volatile gases released by the wood and creosote will form quickly.

**Solution:** Burn smaller, hotter fires using seasoned firewood with a good draft. Never air-starve the fire. This way, the heat will quickly warm up the flue and increase the draft, while volatile gases burn up in the stove the way they should and your chimney will have much less build up.

***An oversize or outdated stove.*** When a stove is too big for the space it heats, it's likely to be burned in the closed down, creosote-producing mode. Also, many stoves sold in the 70s and early 80s are now obsolete. They're not as clean burning as the newer, UL certified models designed to meet new emissions standards.

**Solution:** Replace your old stove with a new high-tech unit correctly sized for the space you want to heat and matched with the proper venting system.

***A neglected chimney flue.*** Many of us don't give our chimneys a second thought until something goes wrong.

In addition to practicing good wood burning habits, initiate a regular inspection and maintenance program. Find an experienced, certified professional to clean and inspect your flue on an annual basis. If you clean your own flue, do so practicing good safety techniques for using ladders and climbing on roofs.

**A Final Note:**

If you are planning to install a wood stove, please note, ***stove and chimney installation are "NOT" home handyman chores.*** They call for professional know-how, special training, technical expertise and familiarity with the local building codes. Be sure to check with Lane County on required building permits. Installation that is done without official inspection and permits will void insurance coverage and most importantly can lead to a tragic fire.



## Fire Prevention Week is October 4 to 10, 2020

The theme of this year's Fire Prevention Week will be "Serve Up Fire Safety in the Kitchen," the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) announced. The week-long NFPA-sponsored event will take place from Oct. 4 to Oct. 10 and tackle the leading cause of home fires: unattended cooking and cooking equipment.



**The basic rules of kitchen safety include:**

- Beware of Grease. When too hot, grease can catch fire quickly.
- Stay Near the Heat Source.
- Be Alert.
- Be Neat, Clean and Tidy.
- Watch those Kids.
- Use a Timer.
- Dress to Cook.
- Give the Grilling Some Space.

## Eight Bad Habits That Could Burn Your House Down



An important mission of Lane Fire Authority is fire prevention. Below is a list of the most common causes of fires in the home. Every year we are called to extinguish fires directly related to one or more of these causes. Please take a moment to look over this list and the associated information.

**1. Crowding appliances together:** When you have inadequate space around appliances, you are not allowing the heat they generate to dissipate. All major appliances should be plugged directly into a wall outlet rather than using extension cords or power strips to clump them in the same area. More than one heat-producing appliance in an outlet at a time risks overloading the wiring, putting you at risk for an electrical fire. Another safety tip; sign up to get recall notices on your major appliances at [Recalls.gov](https://www.recalls.gov). Occasionally products are recalled that have been found to be potentially dangerous due to overheating.

**2. Walking away from food cooking in the kitchen:** Cooking, particularly unattended cooking, is by far the leading cause of home fires. It only takes a few seconds for an unwatched pot or skillet to catch fire. Frying is the riskiest cooking method, according to the U.S. Fire Administration.

**3. "Daisy-chaining" extension cords:** Using extension cords should always be a temporary solution. Stringing extension cords together is risky at best,



as most inexpensive extension cords use small gauge wire. When an appliance hooked to these cords exceeds the cord's electrical current capability, they overheat. The longer the cord (and the more extension cords that are connected) the greater the risk for overheating, potentially leading to shorts and fires.

Further, never assume that a power strip has built-in surge protection. To have surge protection, a power strip must state their capability and have UL, CSA-US or ETL-US labels on them.

**4. Making do with damaged or worn out cords:** Using compromised cords can cause electric shock as well as increase your fire risk if heat from the wires comes in contact with anything that can burn. In less than 30 seconds, the USFA reveals, "a small flame can get completely out of control and turn into a major fire."

**5. Leaving home with an electrical appliance running:** With a few exceptions, it is never wise to leave an appliance turned on when you leave the house. The greatest risks for fire come from unattended dryers and cooking on the stove or in the oven.

**6. Ignoring the lint that needs to be cleaned out from the dryer:** According to the USFA, 2,900 home clothes dryer fires are reported each year and cause \$35 million in property loss. Thirty-four percent of those blazes were caused because the homeowner didn't clean the dryer. Without regular cleaning, the lint builds up, preventing heat from the dryer being able to escape. Not only should you clean your lint filter regularly, but check and clean your dryer hose leading all the way to the exterior vent at least once a year.

**7. Leaving a lit candle unattended:** Sound like common sense? Yes, but it is surprising how many of us light a candle, leave it unattended and forget to extinguish it. Even a single votive can lead to a devastating fire. If you do use candles, keep them to a minimum, use sturdy holders and extinguish them when you leave the room.

**8. Cleaning out your fireplace, wood stove or chimney, here's what you need to know:** Disposing of ashes requires special precautions. Always place them in a metal bucket, take them outside, away from all flammable items and fill the bucket with water. You can then use the ashes in your garden (a good addition to your compost pile), or

allow them to dry before placing them in the trash.

## Please Be Safe When Walking on Rural Roads

By Stan Turner



I drive on rural roads daily and frequently pass individuals walking on or near the roadway. More than half the time they are walking in the same direction as traffic. I would like to make an earnest and emphatic plea to all pedestrians - **walk facing on-coming traffic.** Doing so enables you and the driver to observe the actions of the other.

There are other safety guidelines for walkers that are also important:

**Wear bright clothing** that can be readily seen by drivers. Wearing reflective vests and/or jackets is even better.

If you are with a group, **walk single file.**

**Be aware of bikes and runners.**

If are **on a bike** or out **running/jogging** and preparing to pass a walker, give her/him a simple advance warning.

**Use a short leash** if you are walking your dog.

**Be familiar with your walking route** and if at all possible walk during daylight.

**Carry a flashing red light** if you walk early in the morning or at twilight & night (most bike shops have them). **Find someone to walk with.**

When you **cross the road, be certain to look both ways at least twice.** Drivers on rural roads often drive fast and are not watching for pedestrians.

**Take your cell phone** with you when you walk and carry identification.

## Alvadore Rural Fire Department

by Fred Scalise, LFA Firefighter/Engineer, LFA Historian

*This article is part of a continuing series by Fred Scalise on the history of communities within the boundaries of Lane Fire Authority.*



As the 1930s came to a close, and World War II loomed on the horizon, the town of Alvadore (named for

Alvadore Welch, the man who built an electric railway through the town in 1912; the town was previously known as Fern Ridge) was a bustling community known for its prune, apple, pear, and cherry orchards. In the first third of the twentieth century, the town supported two grocery stores, a soda & candy shop, a grade school and community hall, post office, furniture store, a hay and grain warehouse, lumber yard, barber shop, restaurant, hotel, pool hall, church, blacksmith shop, automobile repair garage, and both a fruit dryer and a fruit packing house. The town even had a railroad station and a rail line that ran to Portland.

The village of Franklin (also known as Smithfield), located 3 miles to the northwest of Alvadore on the Westside Territorial Road, was similarly thriving at this time. A general merchandise store, two churches, a school and grange hall, a produce & grain warehouse, blacksmith shop, and a pork packing house were all located in Franklin during the first 30 years of the Twentieth Century.

What neither community had was a fire department, and fires in those days were frequent and often catastrophic.

Creation of a "Fern Ridge" fire district, which would include Alvadore and Franklin as well as Veneta, Elmira, Noti, Vaughn, and Crow, was explored in the late 1940s and early 1950s. However, a majority of the residents in these areas were opposed to the fifty cents to one dollar a year in taxes it would cost to operate such a district. It was likely the district's proposed sole fire engine would be stationed in Veneta. As a result, Alvadore and Franklin continued relying on the kindness and generosity of neighboring fire districts, hoping they would send assistance whenever an emergency occurred.



Throughout the late 1940s and 1950s, Western Lane Fire Protection Service was the primary source for fire assistance in rural areas that were not located within a tax-supported fire protection district. Western Lane FPS's



primary responsibility was fighting forest fires. They were a private cooperative funded by the companies who had major timber holdings in western Lane County, and they were neither trained nor equipped to fight structure fires.

Junction City Rural Fire Protection District (RFPD) or Veneta RFPD would sometimes send firefighters to Franklin. Irving RFPD or Bethel RFPD would sometimes respond to fires in the Alvadore area. However, response was never guaranteed, and these fire departments were often unable or unwilling to send anything at all. In reality, by the time crews from these neighboring districts arrived on-scene, there was often nothing left to save.

Two fires in the Franklin and Alvadore areas underscored the need for local firefighting capabilities.

On September 5, 1956, a house two lots to the east of the Franklin Store caught fire. A hot wind from the east and southeast fanned the flames and carried the fire to the next house to the west. The intensity of the flames together with the strong winds threatened to consume the Franklin Store and at least a half dozen other homes in the immediate area. Local residents, feverishly fighting the fire with garden hoses, managed to save a parked automobile and prevent the fire from spreading to the store and nearby houses. By the time a fire engine from Veneta arrived on-scene, two houses had burned to the ground, and the roofs of the Franklin Store and a number of adjacent homes had been badly damaged. If the wind had been just a little stronger, the entire village of Franklin could have been lost.

In 1959, an explosion in a rental house on Snyder Road resulted in the structure being engulfed in flames. A representative from Bethel RFPD arrived on-scene and advised the neighbors who were battling the blaze that because of a new policy, member agencies of the Lane County Firefighters Association would no longer respond to fires that occurred in areas that were not within an established fire protection district. Eventually a fire engine and crew from Western Lane Fire Protection Service arrived and put out the remaining fire – but by that time all that was left standing of the house was half of one wall.

Community leaders in both Alvadore and Franklin realized that the time had come to finally establish local fire departments. Because of the relatively

small populations in each town, it was clear that this would happen only if the two communities joined forces to create a single fire district.

After an affirmative vote by local residents, the Lane County Board of Commissioners authorized the formation of the Alvadore Rural Fire Department on August 26, 1960. The new district covered the area from the west side of the Eugene Airport (Perkerson Road), to just west of Territorial Road, and from Fernridge Reservoir to just south of Highway 36.

Gordon McClure was appointed fire chief. He and a small band of volunteers began inspecting equipment and attending training drills at neighboring fire districts to learn the basics of firefighting and determine what was going to be needed to get the new department up and running. Chief McClure was forced to resign for health reasons in June 1961, and was succeeded by Terrence (Terry) Korn.

When the first tax money became available in July 1961, the new district hit the road running with both a budget and a plan of action. The District purchased a junked 1942 K5 International fire truck out of a local farmer's "boneyard" for \$600. District representatives also went to the state civil defense surplus auction in Salem and purchased a stripped-down 1947 6x6 GMC G.I.-chassis portable machine shop truck, 6 usable tires (\$2 each) for the International fire engine, a 200 gpm Carter pump for the GMC, and enough sheet metal to make water tanks for both fire engines.

Ken Drew and Perry Elliot spent countless hours welding together a 500 gallon tank for the International, and a 1,700 gallon tank for the GMC. Herb Jacobson, owner of the Alvadore Garage, along with a variety of other volunteers, overhauled the two trucks to get them into reliable working order. They mounted water tanks, pumps, emergency lights, and other firefighting equipment, and then painted them.

As the "new" fire trucks were getting ready to be put into service, Terry Korn, Art Loudens, Perry Elliot, and Ken Drew went to another state surplus auction and found another International fire engine for sale. They didn't have the money for or really need another truck, but, the fire engine being offered came with variety of firefighting equipment that Alvadore RFD desperately did need. So they joined forces with a logger who

only wanted the truck, successfully won the auction, and came home with 1,000 feet of 2-1/2-inch hose, 100 feet of 1-1/2-inch hose, two 10-foot sections of hard suction hose, a variety of hose nozzles, a roof ladder, two 30-foot extension ladders, axes, and a variety of miscellaneous firefighting tools and supplies.

Dick Bauer, who owned a fruit and nut drying facility (Alvadore Dryer) donated two lots across the street from the present-day Alvadore fire station in September 1961, and the community immediately pitched in to build a station to house the two fire engines. The 2-bay, shed roof station was constructed with volunteer labor, using mostly donated, discounted, or salvaged building materials. A second story was later added to the rear of the station using plywood salvaged from a shed on Art Loudens's property.



The Alvadore firemen spent the winter of 1961/1962 in training, learning the basics of firefighting through the State Vocational Education program. In March 1962, the volunteers hosted a fund-raising ham dinner at the Franklin Grange – the money raised was used to buy helmets, turnout coats, and additional hose.

Response capabilities for the western portion of the District were improved by the building of a station in Franklin in 1969. Using volunteer labor and donated lumber and other building materials, the station was completed and placed into service in January 1970 at a total cost to the taxpayers of \$1,500. The two original Alvadore fire engines (1942 International and 1947 GMC) were moved to Franklin. A 1951 Diamond T, and a brand new 1969 Ford, became the frontline fire engines based in Alvadore. The Ford had a 2,000 gallon tank and 750 gpm pump. By today's standards it would be classified as an "interface" engine designed to be used to suppress both structure, and farm field and brush fires.

From 1962 through 1972, the Alvadore Rural Fire Department responded to an



average of 10 calls per year to fires in the District, and mutual aid requests from nearby districts. In keeping with the agricultural characteristic of the District, the most common responses were to fires involving barns, chicken houses, and farm fields.

The early 1970s marked the beginning of major changes in the fire service. A variety of new regulations required such things as the use of self-contained breathing apparatus, “certified” protective clothing, and standardized recurring firefighter training. The early 1970s also saw the fire service assuming a leading role in providing emergency medical care. All of these changes meant significantly higher operating costs for fire departments, and Alvadore RFD was no exception.

In its first year of operation, the annual operating budget for Alvadore RFD was \$2,500. By 1967, the budget had increased to \$4,700. Even at the higher level, there was not enough money to buy and maintain quality apparatus and firefighting equipment, obtain required training, maintain and expand station facilities, and take on the new costs associated with emergency medical services. The District just didn’t have the population base to support increased taxes.

In April 1973, Alvadore Rural Fire Department formally merged with neighboring Irving Rural Fire Protection District to form Lane Rural Fire Protection District No. 1. The merger was beneficial to both districts; Irving had a stable and sufficient tax base, but declining volunteer participation, while Alvadore had plenty of volunteers but insufficient money.

(Note: Lane Rural Fire Protection District No. 1 was officially renamed Lane Rural Fire/Rescue in 1995, to avoid confusion with the newly-formed, neighboring Lane County Fire District One.)

Lane Rural Fire/Rescue and Lane County Fire District No. 1 completed a functional consolidation on July 1, 2012, and now operate together as the Lane Fire Authority (LFA), providing fire, rescue, and emergency medical services to almost 300 square miles of territory located to the west, southwest, and northwest of Eugene. Ironically, this service area encompasses all the communities that would have been located within the Fern Ridge Fire District that was first proposed in 1948.

**Fire Chiefs: Alvadore Rural Fire Department (1960 – 1973)**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dates of Service</u>
Gordon McClure	1960 – 1961
Terry Korn	1961 – 1971
Marvin King	1971 – 1973

*Historical information and materials provided by the following individuals: Terrence (Terry) Korn & Jim Drew*

See something we got wrong? Have information or photographs that you would be willing to share? Let us know. Contact **Fred Scalise** at:

[omnicon\\_envir@hotmail.com](mailto:omnicon_envir@hotmail.com)

**Lane Fire Authority’s  
Historic Past – An Overview**  
by Fred Scalise

*This article is part of a continuing series by Fred Scalise on the history of communities within the boundaries of Lane Fire Authority.*

The following article and accompanying chart helps guide the reader through the evolution of Lane Fire Authority. As we continue to print in each bi-yearly edition of *Flash Point* the history of the departments that makes up LFA, the information below will help bring it all together for the reader.

Lane Fire Authority (LFA) is the successor agency that has resulted from the mergers of six (6) historical rural fire protection districts: Irving, Veneta, Alvadore, Crow Valley, Elmira-Noti, and Walton RFPDs. In July 2018, Santa Clara RFPD functionally consolidated with Lane Fire Authority, becoming the seventh historical district to become part of LFA.

**Historical Summary:**

**Irving and Santa Clara**

In early 1942, at the beginning of the U.S. involvement in World War II, residents in the Irving and Santa Clara areas (northwest of the City of Eugene) began organizing and training as auxiliary Civil Defense firefighters. The purpose of this training was to backfill the losses of firefighting personnel to wartime enlistment, and to prepare for the possibility of an enemy aerial bombardment.

By petition and vote, residents of the Santa Clara area created **Santa Clara RFPD** in September **1943**.

**2. Lane Fire / Rescue**

Local business leaders in the Irving area purchased a fire engine, and formed a private “fire co-operative”, in 1943.

Residents of the Irving area voted to convert the private fire service to a public, tax-base supported fire district, **Irving RFPD**, on July 8, **1944**.

Two catastrophic fires in the communities of Alvadore and Franklin resulted in local residents voting to create **Alvadore RFPD** on August 26, **1960**.

In April **1973**, Alvadore RFPD formally merged with neighboring Irving RFPD to form the **Lane Rural Fire Protection District No. 1**. The name of this district was officially changed to **Lane Rural Fire / Rescue** in **1995**.

**3. Lane County Fire District No. 1**

In 1952, Boy Scout Explorer Troop 96 initiated a community service project to acquire a fire engine for Veneta. The boys organized fund-raisers, solicited donations, and in just a few months raised enough money (approximately \$1,100) to buy, repair, and outfit a very well-worn, 1941 Chevrolet truck for use as a firefighting unit. Local business owners provided additional support, and a special election resulted in the creation of the **Veneta RFPD** in August **1953**.

In response to a tragic fatal house fire just west of Noti, residents in the Elmira and Noti communities voted to create the **Elmira-Noti RFPD** in March **1966**.

**Crow Valley RFPD**, serving the rural areas to the southwest of Eugene, was created by an election held on August 2, 1966.

A few concerned residents in the Walton area created a private volunteer fire department in 1973. Voters approved converting this private firefighting brigade to a public, tax-base supported fire district, **Walton RFPD**, in **1977**.

The Veneta and Elmira-Noti districts merged to create **Fernridge RFPD** in June **1989**. Walton RFPD merged with Fernridge RFPD in 1993.

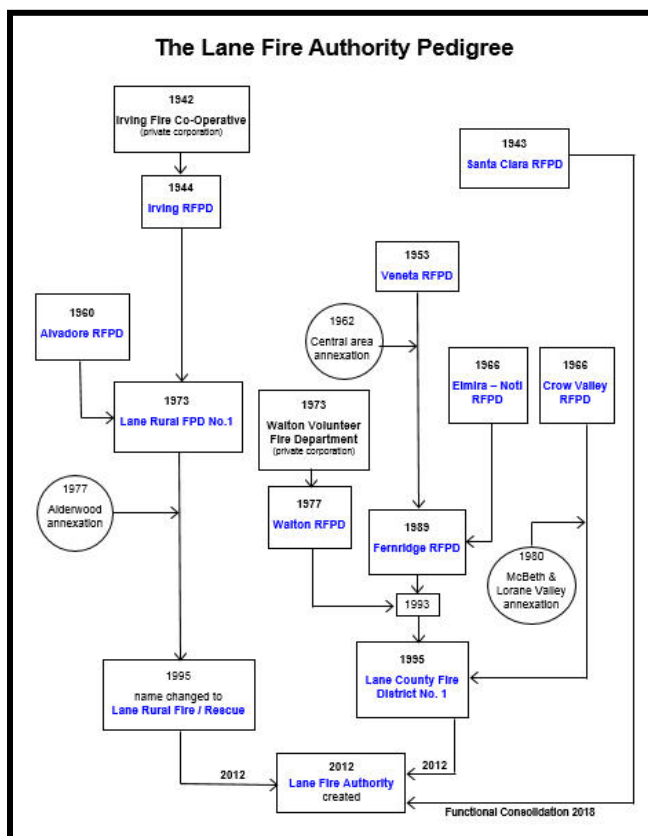
Crow Valley RFPD merged with Fernridge RFPD, to create **Lane County Fire District No.1**, in **1995**.

**4. Lane Fire Authority**

In July **2012**, Lane County Fire District No. 1 and Lane Rural Fire / Rescue completed a functional consolidation to create the **Lane Fire Authority**. The two districts formerly merged in 2016.



In July 2018, Santa Clara RFPD functionally consolidated with Lane Fire Authority.



## Ice on the Road?

### Safety Tips to Remember

**The #1 icy road driving tip: *Reduce your speed.*** Slowing down is the most important thing to do when driving on ice and snow. High speeds make it both easy to lose control and difficult to stop. You should never be driving faster than 45mph in *any* vehicle when roads are icy - not even on highways! In many cases, much slower speeds are necessary. You can slide off of the road on certain types of more treacherous icing - like black ice - at 10mph or less! If you're fishtailing or sliding at all, it means you are going too fast for the conditions.



***You don't have the skill to drive at normal speeds on icy roads:*** A factor in many of the serious and fatal crashes is *overconfidence* in one's abilities and/or equipment (traction control, antilock brakes, stability control, winter tires). A person who enters a high-speed slide will quickly learn that it is something they *can't* handle - but all too late.

**The #2 icy road driving tip: *Don't drive on icy roads.*** The *best* way to avoid an accident on an icy road is to simply stay off the roads until the threat passes.

**Pay attention to the weather:** Make the weather forecast part of your daily routine during the winter. Awareness of

conditions will help you be more prepared.

**Go easy on your brakes:** Brake application is a common trigger of slides that result in a loss of vehicle control. ABS (antilock brakes) do not work well on ice and snow, and often will lock up your wheels regardless.

**Turn into a slide:** If you're fishtailing or sliding, it usually means you are going too fast. Reduce your speed so you won't need to worry about this! Most high-speed slides are difficult to correct successfully. If you're caught off guard and begin sliding, turn your wheels in the direction that the rear of your car is sliding.

**Icy road accidents happen in multiples:** Your own accident is sometimes not the greatest threat to you. Instead, it is additional out-of-control vehicles that can crash into you.

**Don't stop for accidents or stranded vehicles along an icy roadway:** Being a Good Samaritan is a noble thing, but on an icy road, it can cause more problems than it solves. Unless the stranded driver is in immediate danger, the best thing you can do is contact the authorities (call 911), who are equipped to safely block the road or divert traffic while a tow truck can do the job properly.

**Avoid hills or other dangerous roads during icy conditions:** The laws of physics are unforgiving! If you attempt to tackle a steep enough incline, there is nothing you can do to stop gravity from taking its toll.

## Carbon Monoxide Detectors Save Lives



Carbon monoxide is a by-product of combustion, present whenever fuel is burned. It is produced by common household appliances such as gas or oil furnaces, clothes dryers, water heaters, ovens and ranges that use a burning product. . A charcoal grill operating in an enclosed area, a fire burning in a fireplace or a car running in an attached garage also produce carbon monoxide.

According to the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), carbon monoxide is the number one cause of poisoning deaths in the U.S.A. It is odorless and tasteless. If present, it can cause illness and death. Making sure furnaces and other potential carbon

monoxide sources are properly vented and in good working condition, along with owning a UL listed carbon monoxide detector, could become a matter of life and death.

What do you do and who do you call if your carbon monoxide detector goes into alarm?

First, immediately have everyone move to a location that has fresh air. Do a head count to be sure all persons are accounted for.

Second, check to see if your carbon monoxide detector is signaling a low battery that needs replacement.

Third, call 911 and ask for assistance. Personnel and an apparatus from Lane Fire Authority will respond and assess both the occupants and dwelling.

Fourth, do not re-enter the premises until you have been assured there is no longer carbon monoxide present.

## How to Develop a Home Escape Plan

- Pull together everyone in your household and make a plan. Walk through your home and inspect all possible exits and escape routes. Households with children should consider drawing a floor plan of your home, marking two ways out of each room, including windows and doors. Also, mark the location of each smoke alarm.

- A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat and fire. Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm Code® requires interconnected smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.

- When you walk through your plan, check to make sure the escape routes are clear and doors and windows can be opened easily.

- Choose an outside meeting place (i.e. neighbor's house, a light post, mailbox, or stop sign) a safe distance in front of your home where everyone can meet after they've escaped. Make sure to mark the location of the meeting place on your escape plan.

- Go outside to see if your street number is clearly visible from the road. If not, paint it on the curb or install house numbers to ensure that responding emergency personnel can find your home.



- Have everyone memorize the emergency phone number of the fire department. That way any member of the household can call from a neighbor's home or a cellular phone once safely outside.

- If there are infants, older adults, or family members with mobility limitations, make sure that someone is assigned to assist them in the fire drill and in the event of an emergency. Assign a backup person too, in case the designee is not home during the emergency

- If windows or doors in your home have security bars, make sure that the bars have emergency release devices inside so that they can be opened immediately in an emergency. Emergency release devices won't compromise your security - but they will increase your chances of safely escaping a home fire.

- Tell guests or visitors to your home about your family's fire escape plan. When staying overnight at other people's homes, ask about their escape plan. If they don't have a plan in place, offer to help them make one. This is especially important when children are permitted to attend "sleepovers" at friends' homes.

- Be fully prepared for a real fire: when a smoke alarm sounds, get out immediately.

- Once you're out, stay out! Under no circumstances should you ever go back into a burning building. If someone is missing, inform the fire department dispatcher when you call. Firefighters have the skills and equipment to perform rescues.

## Put your plan to the test

Practice your home fire escape plan twice a year, making the drill as realistic as possible.

- Make arrangements in your plan for anyone in your home who has a disability.



- Allow children to master fire escape planning and practice before holding a fire drill at night when they are sleeping. The objective is to practice, not to frighten, so telling children there will be a drill before they go to bed can be as effective as a surprise drill.

It is important to determine during the drill whether children and others can readily waken to the sound of the smoke alarm. If they fail to awaken, make sure that someone is assigned to wake them up as part of the drill and in a real emergency situation.

- If your home has two floors, every family member (including children) must be able to escape from the second floor rooms. Escape ladders can be placed in or near windows to provide an additional escape route. Review the manufacturer's instructions carefully so you'll be able to use a safety ladder in an emergency. Practice setting up the ladder from a first floor window to make sure you can do it correctly and quickly. Children should only practice with a grown-up, and only from a first-story window. Store the ladder near the window, in an easily accessible location. You don't want to have to search for it during a fire.

Always choose the escape route that is safest – the one with the least amount of smoke and heat – but be prepared to escape under toxic smoke if necessary. When you do your fire drill, everyone in the family should practice getting low and going under the smoke to your exit.

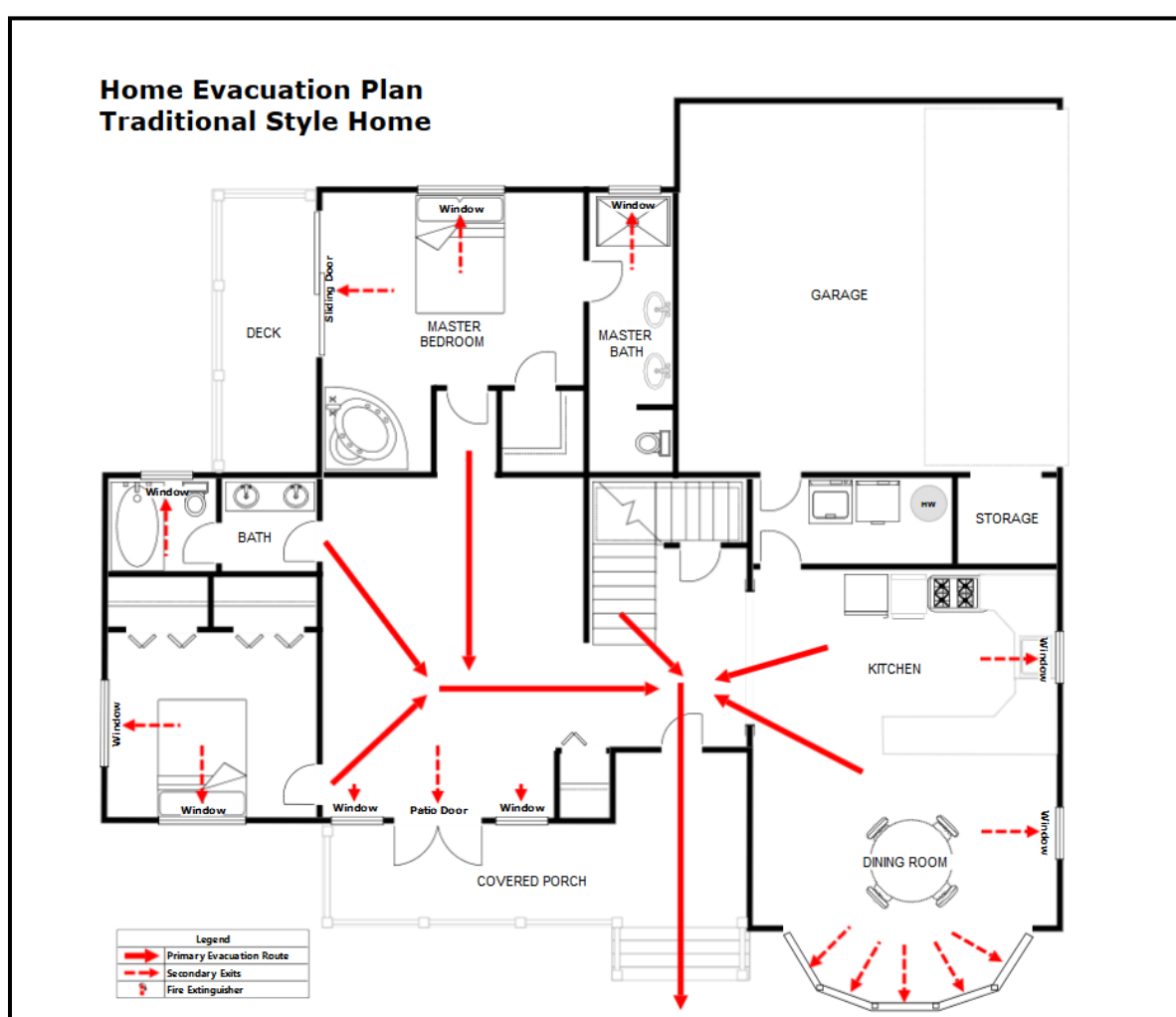
- Closing doors on your way out slows the spread of fire, giving you more time to safely escape.

- In some cases, smoke or fire may prevent you from exiting your home or apartment building. To prepare for an emergency like this, practice "sealing yourself in for safety" as part of your home fire escape plan. Close all doors between you and the fire. Use duct tape or towels to seal the door cracks and cover air vents to keep smoke from coming in. If possible, open your windows at the top and bottom so fresh air can get in. Call the fire department to report your exact location. Wave a flashlight or light-colored cloth at the window to let the fire department know where you are located.

## Clear Your Escape Routes

Items that block doors and windows in your home could keep you from escaping in the event of a home fire. And that could mean the difference between life and death. So unblock your exits today! Key to your family's safety is planning and practicing a home fire escape plan twice a year. Start by identifying two escape routes out of each room, if possible, then make sure that each of those escape routes can be used safely by everyone.

**Planning escape routes in advance saves lives.**





# Outdoor Burn Permit

Call the Outdoor Burning Advisory Line at 541-726-3976 each day before burning.

Select #4 for Lane Fire Authority's area.

Valid between APPROXIMATELY October and June

Burn season is closed from APPROXIMATELY June to September

*In accordance with the provisions of ORS 478.960:*

- ◆ This permit must be on the premises when burning activity occurs.
- ◆ This permit is valid during the outdoor burn season. Although the season is defined as being from October to June, it may be closed at any time when poor air quality or fire danger is present.
- ◆ This permit only allows the burning of **woody** yard trimmings.
- ◆ Burn pile sizes must be no larger than 3 cubic yards. Multiple piles may be burned at one time.
- ◆ Allow a minimum of 50 feet clearance between burn piles and combustibles not to be burned.
- ◆ All outdoor burning shall be constantly attended by a responsible person at all times.
- ◆ Have water and tools available for controlling or extinguishing the fire.
- ◆ Follow the daily start and stop burning times.

**This permit shall be voided, and the holder subject to fines and recovery of expenses as authorized under ORS 478.965, if determined to be burning contrary to authorized conditions and/or burning unauthorized materials.**

## Prohibited Burning

- ◆ **Materials prohibited from being burned include:** garbage, plastics, grass clippings, wire insulation, asbestos-containing materials, automobile parts, asphalt, petroleum by-products, tires, cardboard, clothing, grass clippings, petroleum treated materials, rubber products, demolition waste. Construction waste, animal remains, or animal or vegetable matter related to any food service or preparation, or any other material which normally emits dense smoke, noxious odors or hazardous air contaminants.
- ◆ **Burning Leaves (within Veneta City limits)** this means needles or leaf material which has fallen from trees, shrubs, or plants.
- ◆ **Burning grass clippings is prohibited in Lane County.**
- ◆ **Burning in barrels is prohibited in Lane County.**

If a fire burns out of control call 911 immediately

To report a complaint about burning, call the LRAPA complaint line at 541-726-1930

## Safety Guidelines

- ◆ Call the burn advisory line every day prior to lighting a burn pile. You may also check LRAPA's web-site at [www.lrapa.org](http://www.lrapa.org)
- ◆ Keep the yard debris pile dry by covering with plastic until ready to burn. Remove plastic before lighting.
- ◆ Use small, dry wood to start a fire like one would for a camp fire. Add small amounts of yard debris to the fire, keeping it burning hot and clean with little smoke.
- ◆ **Never** use flammable liquids to start a fire. Accelerants can be invisible until ignited, and explosive.
- ◆ Maintain a safe area around the burn pile where children are not allowed.

## Backyard Burning Permit:

The Backyard Burning season is determined by both the fire service and the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA). LRAPA has determined that backyard burning will be allowed between the dates of October 1 through June 15. The season can be closed on any day due to poor air quality or fire danger. The season is permanently closed from June 16 to September 30 due to an increase in fire

danger. A Lane Fire Authority burn permit must be on the premises while burning backyard vegetation.

## Slash Burning Permit:

This permit is issued by the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) to burn logging slash debris. Contact Western Lane ODF at 541-935-2283 for more information.

## LRAPA Letter Permit:

This type of permit is generally issued for land clearing operations. These burn piles are often very large, and material to be burned looks like logging slash and will include stumps. LRAPA performs a required inspection of the piles and often requests that the fire department accompany them for advice regarding any fire safety concerns. LRAPA will then issue a letter that permits the type and amount of material to be burned, but the District issues the permit to actually burn the material. The letter permit usually has a termination date whereby if the material does not get burned, then the responsible party will need to obtain an extension. These fires can be started on a sanctioned burn day and be allowed to burn continually until the material is gone. LRAPA will advise the responsible party on methods to gain a rapid, efficient burn. Contact LRAPA at 541-736-1056.

A Burn Permit must be issued by the Fire District prior to lighting a land clearing, non-logging debris burn pile.

## Commercial Agricultural Burning:

Lane Fire Authority has authority over burning of vegetative material that does not fit either into the Backyard or Letter Burn Permit categories. A Commercial Agricultural burn is different than a standard outdoor burn because the volume of material is more than what could be burned in a single day's burning, i.e., large amount of windfall debris after a storm. These fires are to be started on an approved burn day and are allowed to burn continually until the material is gone. Once the material is ignited additional material may not be added. Lane Fire Authority may inspect the piles

to be burned to ensure the piles do not contain any prohibited items or materials, and will advise the responsible party of any additional requirements, such as suppression equipment, or clearing.

**Note:** Commercial Agricultural Burns are for downed, dead material, not live standing grass or weeds. Safety Guidelines on this permit must be followed.

**Note:** Field burning is not allowed under our Agricultural Burn Permit even though it is an agricultural process. Field burning is managed through the Department of Agriculture under rules established by DEQ, for fields that are registered by the grass seed grower.

**Note:** Slash burning is managed by ODF as a part of permitted logging operations. Burning is permitted under a forestry smoke management plan and is exempt from the rules of LRAPA.

## Open Fires:

**Recreational, cooking, and warming fires do not require a permit as long as these fires are on the property of the legal occupant of that property, and the fire is in a designated fire ring.** A fire ring should not be larger than 36" across with additional clearing space or green grass that has been mowed short. A cooking fire usually has a set-up for a grate or spit. These types of fires can be initiated at any time of the year providing there is not a total ban of all fires imposed by ODF through a **Regulated Use Closure**, which is often imposed in the dry summer months. Fire suppression equipment, such as an adequate water supply and shovel should be kept nearby and used to extinguish the fire when it is not in use.

**Recreational, cooking, warming and ceremonial fires** are allowed when set for recreational purposes on private property or in designated recreational areas (such as parks, campsites and campgrounds).



# Lane Fire Authority's 2020-2021 Burn Permit Information.

On the previous page of this edition of Flash Point is a copy of Lane Fire Authority's Burn Permit. The information on this page is an attempt to guide the reader through the labyrinth of definitions, rules and regulations, related to the *Burn Season* and LFA's Burn Permit. Much of this information, along with a printable copy of LFA's Burn Permit, can be found at our website: [www.lanefire.org](http://www.lanefire.org). (On our home page, click *Fire and Burn Season Information* in the menu on the left hand side).

Please note: Lane Fire Authority does not write the yard waste burning rules. They are created by the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA). We issue the burn permits, set limits on dates when burning is permitted, and are dispatch to reportedly illegal fires. However, LRAPA determines if it is a "Burn Day" and what can be burned.

- If you live within the Eugene/Springfield Urban Growth Boundary (see the map below): Outdoor burning is always prohibited on lots smaller than 2 acres inside the Eugene Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and on lots smaller than 0.5 acre inside the City of Springfield and the Springfield UGB. (These limitations are set by LRAPA).

- If you live in the City of Veneta, you may not burn leaves, this means needles or leaf material that has fallen from trees, shrubs, or plants.



- Throughout Lane County, you may not burn garbage, plastics, grass clippings, wire insulation, asbestos-containing materials, automobile parts, asphalt, petroleum by-products, tires, cardboard, clothing, petroleum treated materials, rubber products, demolition waste, construction waste, animal remains, or animal or vegetable matter related to any food service or preparation, or any other material which normally emits dense smoke, noxious odors or hazardous air contaminants.



**Please note:** Throughout the State of Oregon, you may not use a "burn barrel".

- Before you burn, call the backyard burn advisory line (541-726-3979). When you call you will be informed whether you are allowed to have a yard waste fire in your area, and whether it is a "burn day" (i.e. fires allowed).
- Have in your possession a 2020-2021 Outdoor Burn Permit issued by Lane Fire Authority.
- Read and take all the steps necessary to meet the requirements for burning.

## Burn Season Vocabulary and Definitions

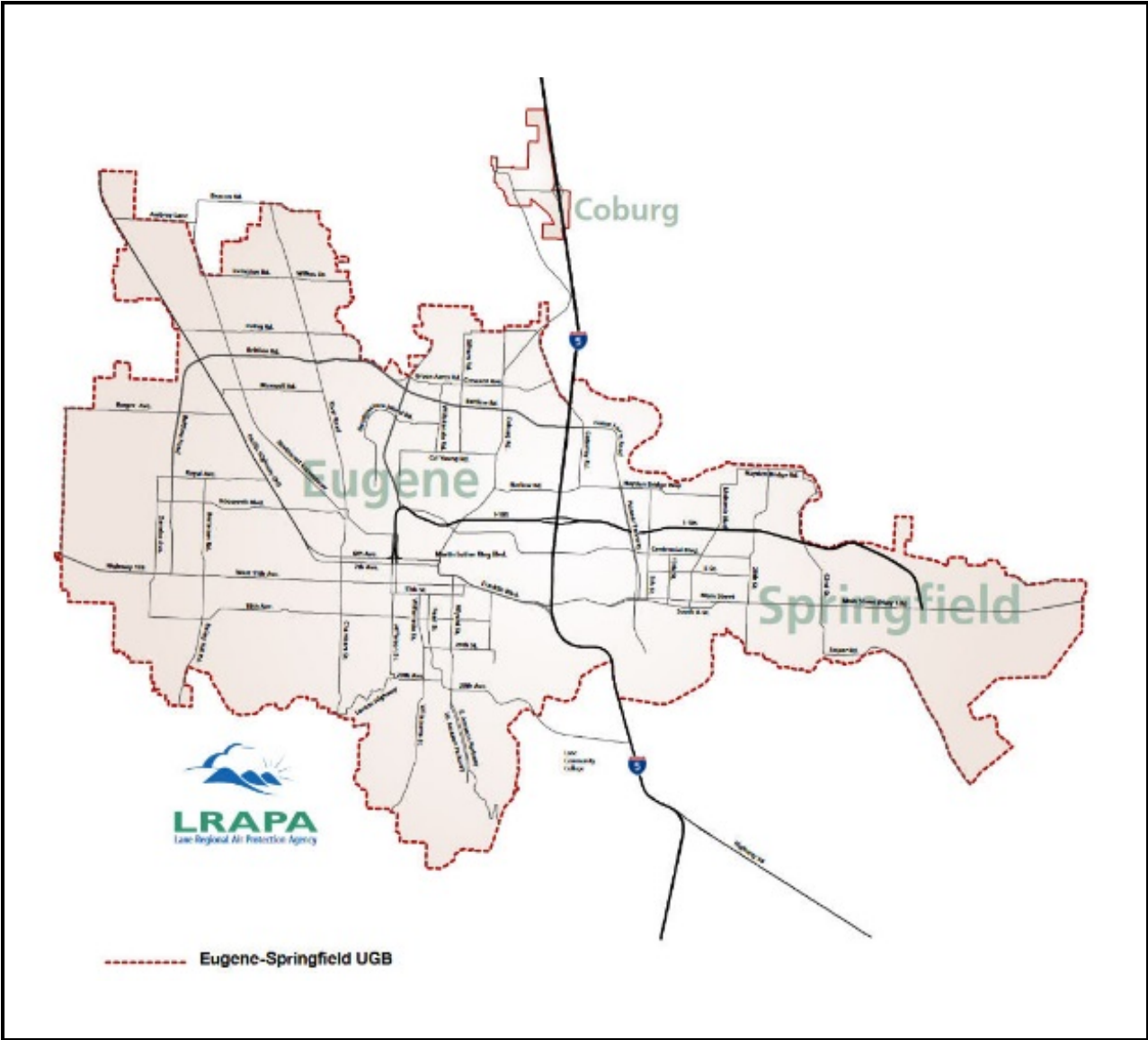
If some of the terminology related to the "burn season" is confusing, the following definitions may help you out.

**-Fire Season** is generally mid-June through mid-October. During "Fire Season" burning of material is generally prohibited. Depending on the weather and other factors, the use of outdoor machinery such as mowers, chainsaws, and generators may also be restricted.

**-Burn Season** is generally mid-October through mid-June. The decision on when Fire & Burn seasons start is made by local state and fire service officials.

**-Recreational Fires**, which constitute cooking and warming fires do not require a permit as long as these fires are on the property of the legal occupant of that property or in designated recreational areas (such as parks, recreational campsites, and campgrounds) and the fire is in a designated fire ring. A fire ring should not be larger than 36" across with additional clearing or space or green grass that has been mowed short. Recreational fires can be initiated at any time of the year providing there is not a ban on fires. Woody yard trimmings leaves and grass clippings shall not be burned.

**-Commercial Agricultural Burning:** Lane Fire Authority has authority over burning of vegetative material that does not fit either into the Backyard or Letter Burn Permit categories. A Commercial Agricultural burn is different than a standard outdoor burn because the volume of material is more than what could be burned in a single day's burning, i.e., large amount of windfall





debris after a storm. These fires are to be started on an approved burn day and are allowed to burn continually until the material is gone. Once the material is ignited additional material may not be added. Lane Fire Authority may inspect the piles to be burned to ensure that the piles do not contain any prohibited items or materials, and will advise the responsible party of any additional requirements, such as suppression equipment, or vegetation clearing. Note: Commercial Agricultural Burns are for downed, dead material, not live standing grass or weeds. Safety Guidelines on this permit must be followed. Note: Field burning is not allowed under our Agricultural Burn Permit even though it is an agricultural process. Field burning is managed through the Department of Agriculture under rules established by DEQ, for fields that are registered by the grass seed grower.

**-Slash Burning** is the burning of debris from a logging operation in which the timber goes to a mill. This land is usually replanted. Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) issues permits for slash burning.

**-Mowing:** During fire season (generally mid-June through mid-October), with exception of a Low Fire Danger Level, mowing of dried and/or cured grass is restricted at all times. Restrictions and times are dependent on the Fire Danger Level which will vary throughout fire season. The culture and harvest of agricultural crops is exempt from this requirement. For mowing restrictions, go to Lane Fire Authority's website and click on the Public Use Restrictions button located on the left side of the home page. In addition, the Fire Danger Level is posted daily on our HOME page during Fire Season.

**-Reporting Complaints:** If you see a column of smoke or flames near your location: Call 911.

If there seems to be a haze of smoke in the area around your location, it is most likely drift smoke from a wildland or field fire outside your immediate location. Check social media for information on smoky conditions.

If you suspect someone is burning slash illegally within the Oregon Department of Forestry's (ODF) protection area call 541-935-2283. If it is within the urban growth boundaries of the City of Veneta, call 911.

Why the restrictions? During the dry season, there is the high risk of fire. During the period between October and June, and from October to June, burning restrictions are issued when atmospheric conditions prevent smoke from clearing out of the Willamette Valley

**Finally, please be aware:** If you burn out-of-season or on a non-burn day or if you burn illegal material, you can be subject to a substantial fine issued by the Oregon Department of Forestry or the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency.

## What Are the Alternatives to Backyard Burning?

Looking for ways to avoid burning or not allowed to burn in your area? Here are some alternatives you might want to consider:

► **Precycle** – Buy recyclable products that can be reused or taken to a recycling facility.

► **Compost** – Let your yard debris and food waste decay. There are some great and easy ways to do this. Go to:

<http://www.wikihow.com/Compost>

► **Reduce** – Reduce the amount of nonrecyclable products you buy and the amount of “junk” mail you receive. Tell companies to remove your name from their mailing lists.

► **Reuse** – Think before you burn if the item can be reused, fixed, or salvaged.

► **Recycle** – Recycling has come a long way. You can now recycle such items as newspaper, magazines, “junk” mail, glass, metal, and plastics. Contact your local recycling center for more information.

► **Properly Dispose of Waste** – Do not litter, dump, or burn prohibited items. Instead, use a waste collection service, transfer station, convenience center, or local landfill.

## Passing of Captain Paul Haake Santa Clara RFPD Volunteer

Lane Fire Authority is saddened to report the passing of Paul Haake, a long-time member of the Santa Clara Rural Fire Protection District.



Paul spent many years as a volunteer firefighter in Tigard, Bend and Santa Clara. He served in Santa Clara for over eighteen years with the rank of Captain. He was honored to be awarded Santa Clara's Firefighter of the Year in 1975.

Paul took the lead rebuilding Santa Clara's first fire engine, originally purchased in 1947. Now known as Engine 161, it is still used for parades and other community events. In 1988, he was elected to the Santa Clara RFPD Board of Directors and served in that position for eleven years.

Paul owned a local business, Office Systems Group, which sold and serviced IBM typewriters and Xerox copiers. After retiring from his business and volunteer firefighting, Paul moved to the Hood River Valley where he enjoyed being an orchardist, raising pears.

Paul was born on June 26, 1943 and died on July 13, 2020 at age 77. Lane Fire Authority and its affiliate, Santa Clara RFPD, thank the family of Paul Haake for sharing with the Santa Clara and the volunteer firefighting communities his talents and many years of service.

**2020 Alarms**  
**Jan. 1 to Sept. 27,**  
**2020:**

**4320**



**Flash Point** is published semi-annually by Lane Fire Authority. Assembled and edited by Stan Turner. Copy editors: Dean Chappell, Jon Jasper, Nick Klingensmith, Julie Meriwether, Mark Peabody, Kathleen Turner, and Cole Webster. Visit our website: [www.lanefire.org](http://www.lanefire.org). Please direct comments and questions to the Editor, Stan Turner, by calling (541) 935-2226 or by sending written comments to Lane Fire Authority, P.O. Box 275, Veneta, OR. 97487.