



Washington State Patrol

STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

Serving Washington Since 1901

ISSUE NO. 30 | OCTOBER 2020

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2020 Mobilizations

State mobilizations for the 2020 fire season started with:

- **Road 11 Fire** in Douglas County
- **Sunset Fire** in Chelan County
- **Colockum Fire** in Chelan County
- **Coulee Meadows Fire** in Douglas County
- **Johnson Butte Command Fire** in Benton County
- **Sunset (Spokane) Fire** in Spokane County
- **Chief Timothy Fire** in Whitman County
- **Badger Lake Fire** in Spokane County
- **Palmer Fire** in Okanogan County
- **Bartholomew Fire** in Spokane County
- **Evans Canyon Fire** in Yakima County

With high temperatures, low humidity, and significant winds, Labor Day this year started one of the most active mobilization periods that we have ever seen. Over the course of two days, resources were mobilized to 11 fires around the state including:

- **Pearl Hill Fire** in Douglas County
- **Cold Springs Fire** in Okanogan County
- **Colfax Fire** in Whitman County
- **Whitney Fire** in Lincoln County
- **Babb Road Fire** in Spokane County
- **Apple Acres Fire** in Chelan County
- **Euclid Track Fire** in Spokane County
- **244th Command Fire** in Pierce County
- **Sumner Grade Fire** in Pierce County
- **Bordeaux Fire** in Thurston County
- **Wawawai Canyon Fire** in Whitman County

Overall, the 2020 fire season is significantly busier than 2019 with 22 fires so far, compared to five fires in 2019. These 22 fires combined have destroyed or damaged over 300 homes.

Two All-Risk Mobilizations were also authorized:

- **April 10:** Support the statewide response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- **May 30:** Support the Seattle Fire Department response to large-scale demonstrations.

2020 Prevention Division by the Numbers

	Total
IFSAC Certificates Issued:	1437
Haz Mat Students Trained:	1490
Mobilization Trainings Delivered:	4
Responses to Mobilization:	24
Initial Inspections Conducted:	730
Reinspections Conducted:	409
Fire & Life Safety Training Sessions for Facilities:	25
Fire & Life Safety Plan Reviews for Schools:	45
Plan Reviews for Contracted Projects:	27
Sprinkler Licenses Issued:	462
Certificates of Competency Issued:	1065
Sprinkler Fitter Certificates Issued:	1814
Fireworks Licenses Issued:	832
Sprinkler Demonstrations Conducted:	0
Sprinkler Trainings Delivered:	0

2020 Fire Training Division by the Numbers

	Students
Weekday Recruit Academy:	70
Weekend Recruit Academy:	0
Fire Service Open Enrollment Courses:	256
Marine Courses:	127
Fire Service Department Training:	892
Regional Direct Delivery Training:	919
Regional Direct Delivery Recruit Academy:	63
National Fire Academy Training:	191
Law Enforcement/Military/ Other Training:	212



State Fire Marshal's Message

After the widespread outbreak of wildfires across Washington State on Labor Day, I joined Assistant State Fire Marshal Melissa Gannie for a visit to fire incidents across the state to view the devastation first hand and show my appreciation to fire crews battling these unprecedented blazes.

I had the opportunity to speak directly with a number of residents about the impact these fires had on their local communities. Families in these neighborhoods expressed their gratitude for the firefighters and all of the resources that continued to battle the fires.



During a tour of the Bordeaux Fire in Thurston County near Rochester, I spoke to Fire Chief Robert Scott of West Thurston Regional Fire Authority. He shared with me the importance of quick and responsive air support in containing the wind driven fire on September 8.

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State Fire Marshal's Message (continued)

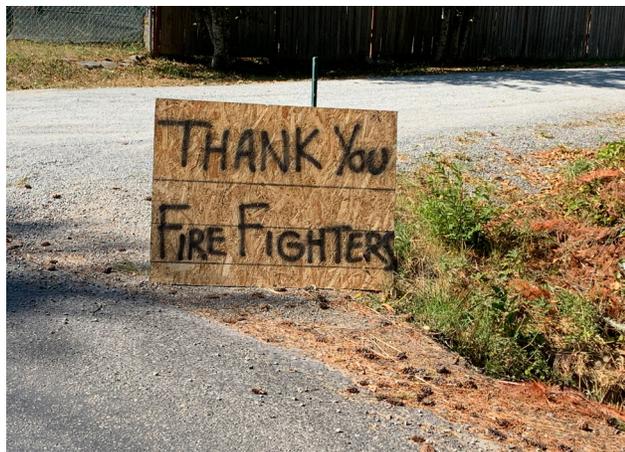
I want to thank Fire Chief Scott and Fire Chief Russ Kaleiwahea for their decisive action in immediately recognizing and requesting additional state resources to mitigate and suppress the fast moving fire.

Chief Scott also highlighted the importance of defensible space to protect homes and structures. While quick action by local fire service crews did much to protect a number of homes, having a defensible space contributes greatly in reducing the number of structures involved.



This was made very clear upon touring the devastation of the 244th Command Fire in Pierce County in Graham. While a number of homes were completely destroyed, other homes with sufficient defensible space were mostly left undamaged.

Graham Fire and Rescue Fire Chief Pat Dale expressed pride in his department and recognized the tremendous effort and sacrifice that they had made in fighting this fire. In an area without hydrants, this fire was fought with a tendered water supply.



I cannot begin to fully express my absolute belief in supporting public servants for all that they do. They are the salt of the earth, and some of the best people out there.

On behalf of the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO), I want to express our tremendous appreciation to all of the firefighters and their families in their tireless efforts and sacrifices in serving the residents of Washington State.

State Fire Marshal's Office Personnel Updates



On August 17, 2020, Mr. Devin McCosh joined the SFMO in the Licensing Section.

Devin has a background in managing digital collections with the Washington Secretary of State's Office and is an active volunteer Firefighter/EMT in Thurston County.



On July 16, 2020, Mr. Brandon Brown joined the SFMO as a Deputy State Fire Marshal in the Inspection Section.

Brandon recently retired from the US Navy after 22-years of service as a Chief Damage Controlman. He also served as the Ship's Fire Marshal where he conducted fire and safety inspections onboard Navy vessels.

Fire Training Academy Updates

New Mobile SCBA Fill Station

Last month, the Fire Training Academy received a Bauer TCOM mobile fill station through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant.

The new mobile SCBA fill station will enhance the capabilities of the FTA to conduct live fire training by decreasing the amount of time needed to fill SCBA cylinders. This mobile unit will also enable the Regional Direct Delivery program to provide adequate fill capabilities in different regions of the state during firefighter training.



Start of Weekday Recruit Academy 20-03

On August 13, 2020, thirty-five firefighter recruits started a 12-week long weekday Recruit Academy that meets National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001 Standard for Firefighter Professional Qualifications at the Firefighter I and Firefighter II, as well as NFPA 472/1072 Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations Levels.

The recruits will learn fire service principles through classroom instruction and rigorous hands-on live fire training.

Company Officers:

Douglas County Fire District 2: Lieutenant Cody Shelton

Spokane County Fire District 8: Firefighter/Medic Brad Mertins

Recruits:

Big Lake Fire District 9: Nathan Hudock

Cle Elum Fire Department: Salvador Zamora Ochoa

Douglas County Fire District 2: Nathan Aiken, Sam Dotson, Joe Ekstrom, Matthew Rick, Conner Ross, and Elijah Weber

Kennewick Fire Department: Ryan Bender, Jeffrey Clawson, Robert Stoeckel, Adam Sutton, Aaron Sutton, Candace Verret, Hunter Watkins, and Lacey Young

Mount Vernon Fire Department: Grant Head, Logan Howlett, Alex Tager, Nick Traweek, and Trevor Zanella

North Mason Regional Fire Authority: Zackary Jenson and Cole Phelan

Pullman Fire Department: Dehn Petersen

Spokane County Fire District 8: Christopher Rodgers and Joseph Schweiger

Spokane Valley Fire Department: Janelle Britton, Tim Cruger, Kris Miller, Kerry Nyhuis, Gary Plaha, Michael Reynolds, Jay Sicilia, Blake Sorensen, and Doug Swanson

If you have any questions regarding this Recruit Academy or how to register a student for future Recruit Academies please call (425) 453-3000, e-mail FTARegister@wsp.wa.gov, or visit <https://www.wsp.wa.gov/fire-training-academy/>.

New UL Report Investigating Near-Miss Lithium-Ion Battery Energy Storage System Explosion

The UL Firefighter Safety Research Institute (FSRI) recently released a report detailing a deflagration incident at a lithium-ion battery energy storage system (ESS) facility in Surprise, Arizona. This incident resulted in four firefighters being severely injured, and four other firefighters and a police officer receiving lesser injuries.

The report provides a detailed technical account of the explosion and fire service response, along with recommendations on how to improve codes, standards, and emergency response training to better protect first responders, maintenance personnel and nearby communities.

“The ability to study lithium-ion battery-related fires on this scale with first-person accounts from the responding firefighters is critically important to protecting the lives of first responders in similar situations,” said UL FSRI Vice President of Research Steve Kerber. “We’re dealing with new technology, which brings about new fire-related hazards. We have an opportunity to learn from this incident and improve future outcomes by sharing resources and enhancing training and safety protocols.”

Lithium-ion battery ESS facilities have proliferated in recent years, presenting a new challenge for the fire protection community. An ESS facility exists in Everett, Snohomish County.

To read the full report and all recommendations, visit the [UL FSRI Website](#).

Statewide Community Risk Assessment: Participation is a Critical Element

The SFMO plans to develop a statewide Community Risk Assessment (CRA) for Washington in the upcoming year. The goal of a CRA is to identify and prioritize risks, followed by the integrated and strategic investment of resources (including emergency response and prevention education) to mitigate and reduce those risks.

Initially, the SFMO will be utilizing available 2019 NFIRS data collected from reporting agencies. With only two thirds of fire agencies reporting, this only gives a partial picture of incidents around the state. We encourage all fire agencies around the state to report their incident data with NFIRS to provide a more complete picture of all risks within the state.

The SFMO is looking to assist local fire agencies in gathering and utilizing data in their own areas and develop a CRA specific to the hazards that they face.

Contact Deputy State Fire Marshal Robert Wittenberg at (360) 596-3929 or robert.wittenberg@wsp.wa.gov for more information on community risk reduction.

2021 Fire Sprinkler Industry Renewal Cycle

The renewal cycle for Fire Protection Sprinkler System Contractor licenses and their certified employees began in September. This includes all designers, underground installers, and inspection technician certifications issued under [RCW 18.160](#), and all pipefitter certifications issued under [RCW 18.270](#). All licenses and certifications expire on December 31, 2020. The renewal process will continue through to the end of the year.

Any fire sprinkler professional who has not renewed their license or certification prior to December 31, 2020, will no longer be legal to engage in the sprinkler trade within the state of Washington. This may impact any ongoing or otherwise incomplete projects going into the upcoming year.

Preliminary lists of licenses and certificate holders renewed for 2021 will be available on the SFMO website the first week of January 2021 to assist local jurisdictions verify who is legal to work in the sprinkler trade.

If you have any questions on the renewal cycles call (360) 596-3946 or email firesprinkler@wsp.wa.gov.

Fire Sprinkler Trailer Available for Events

As part of the effort to promote fire safety and community risk reduction, the SFMO offers an effective tool to demonstrate how residential fire sprinkler systems can benefit home owners, community officials, home builders, and firefighters.

Our Fire Sprinkler Demonstration Trailer provides live-fire demonstrations with active sprinkler activations that are visible from two large viewing windows. The fire sprinklers used are residential sprinkler heads that have a temperature rating of 155 degrees.

In previous years, SFMO staff attended a number of public safety events with the trailer, including job fairs, National Night Out, and safety fairs. Each individual demonstration takes just a few minutes from start to finish.

To host the SFMO's residential fire sprinkler trailer at your event, the following is required:

- Level parking area to accommodate a 9' x 24' trailer and the pulling vehicle. A site of 60 feet is usually sufficient.
- A water connection for a garden type hose with at least 35 psi to operate properly.
- Onsite power. Although the trailer comes equipped with a generator, it is preferred to have onsite power for the demonstration.

To request the fire sprinkler trailer at your next event, complete the [reservation form](#).

For further information, contact Assistant Deputy State Fire Marshal Devin McCosh at (360) 596-3919 or firesprinkler@wsp.wa.gov.

Firefighter Certifications Update

The State Fire Marshal's Office has two exciting technology projects in the works that will streamline testing applications and certifications, and will offer new platforms for instruction and certification.

Staff in the Professional Development and Response (PDR) Section are working with Washington State Patrol's Information Technology Division developers to consolidate and streamline our testing records, as well as information for fire service members who participate in the Test Administration Program. Though this project will be mostly unseen to test candidates and testing personnel, staff will be able to more quickly and efficiently reconcile test applications and certification records.

The results of the second project will be far more visible to members of Washington's fire service. In partnership with the Fire Training Academy, we are exploring and evaluating various platforms to deliver both online and blended instruction, as well as computer-based certification testing. The SFMO is also exploring a number of options to replace current test management software. The primary goal of this project is to make both instruction and certification testing more efficient and more widely available to the fire service.

To find the most up to date information on certification testing, including information regarding training, test references, and skill sheets for all of the new levels of accreditation, visit www.wsp.wa.gov/fire-service-certification.

For further information contact the PDR Section at (360) 596-3945 or ifsacquestions@wsp.wa.gov.

Hazardous Materials Training Continues

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on fire service around the state and greatly impacted the ability of local departments to send personnel to outside training or bring training providers in-house.

Through all this, the State Fire Marshal's Hazardous Materials Training program has continued to deliver as much training as possible to the state's first responders. Training is being scheduled for Awareness, Operations, Technician, and Incident Command. Agencies interested in training must be able to comply with the direction of their local public health agency and provide enough space for adequate social distancing in both the classroom and on the drill ground.

A valuable addition to the Hazardous Materials Training program is a new 12-foot cargo trailer. Not only will the cargo trailer be used to store and transport equipment for more specialized training, it will also make it possible to serve a wider audience and deliver specialized training to locations across the state. The purchase of the trailer and much of its equipment was made possible by the Emergency Management Preparedness Grant provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

For more information on Hazardous Materials training, contact Deputy State Fire Marshal Scott Lancaster at (360) 870-0762 or scott.lancaster@wsp.wa.gov.

Dwelling Units with No Smoke Detection Device – Local Jurisdictions Can Assess Fines

In July 2019, the Washington State Legislature strengthened [RCW 43.44.110](#) relating to smoke detection devices in dwelling units. The new requirements include provisions for:

- Local jurisdictions to issue a fine when a fire occurs in a dwelling unit that was sold on or after July 1, 2019, without at least one smoke detection device.
- Except for administrative costs for enforcing the fine, all moneys shall be deposited into the Smoke Detection Device Awareness Account created in [RCW 43.44.115](#).

The funds deposited into the account may be used for the purposes of:

- Raising public awareness of owners and tenants’ duties pertaining to smoke detection devices and of the danger to life and property resulting from a failure to comply with those duties.
- Administrative costs related to enforcement of the fine.

The law also provides for other installation requirements in dwelling units as well as a fine of not more than \$200 for non-compliance.

Fire Prevention Week™ is October 4-10, 2020!

Fire Prevention Week (FPW) begins next week with “Serve Up Fire Safety in the Kitchen” as this year’s campaign theme. This annual campaign works to educate everyone about simple but important actions they can take to keep themselves and those around them safe.

Home cooking fires were the leading known cause of fires in Washington last year, causing 12 civilian injuries and \$7.2 million in loss. So far in 2020, there have been 1 fatality, 2 civilian injuries, and 4 firefighter injuries.

Key messages for this year’s campaign include:

- Never leave cooking food unattended. Stay in the kitchen particularly while you are frying, grilling or broiling. If you have to leave, even for a short time, turn off the stove.
- Always keep an oven mitt and pan lid nearby when you are cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan to smother the flame. Turn off the burner, and leave the pan covered until it is completely cool.
- Have a “kid-free zone” of at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

The National Fire Protection Association has been the official sponsor of FPW for over 90 years and has fire safety materials for kids and adults available on their website. Get helpful tips on safe kitchen habits at www.fpw.org.

eNFIRS Suite Deployment Update

The United State Fire Administration (USFA) advises the much-anticipated update to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) known as “eNFIRS” is on track to release in mid-October 2020, depending on national emergency response needs. Watch for email updates from the SFMO on this important update.

Reporting No Activity – Why it’s Important

Using NFIRS, fire agencies are able to report months where they have no incident responses by completing and submitting a No Activity report. The SFMO reviews the reporting status of fire agencies, and strives to ensure every incident experience is reported monthly.

Federal grants also require participation in NFIRS. Eligibility may be impacted for not reporting. The No Activity report can demonstrate your agency is actively participating in the system.

How you report “No Activity” may vary depending on your Records Management System (RMS) software. The SFMO has provided general guidance on Reporting No Activity available [here](#).

Aiming High for Data Quality – Tell an Accurate Story

Local incident data entered into NFIRS is a valuable tool to all levels of the fire service: local, state, and national. It aids fire agencies in making data-driven decisions on department staffing, training, and equipment needs, increasing their ability to receive funding for these necessities. It assists in performing risk assessments for local communities and planning prevention efforts to help mitigate those risks. It is also used to identify fire and life safety trends and develop effective strategies to combat them. In order for the data to be effective, it needs to be complete and accurate.

NFIRS data can help departments tell their incident experience story. To give an accurate account, you must have confidence in the information being collected and documented. Certainly, not all fire data will have a “known” outcome upon investigation; however, ensuring incident data is updated tells the story more accurately.

Following the steps below can help provide the best data quality possible, ensuring a higher return value:

- Fill in all required data points in your incident reports, every time.
- Update your incident reports as information becomes available.
- Review your data regularly – this is a good way to see if something was missed or not updated.
- Be familiar with the types of incidents occurring in your jurisdiction, and ensure every response is documented.
- Develop an NFIRS Policy or Plan within your agency. Having agency standards and guidelines for reporting can help ensure reporting success and good data quality.
- Utilize Incident Reference sheets and coding cheat sheets available on the [SFMO website](#), as well as the guides provided by USFA to aid you in reporting.

If you have questions or concerns about your data, reporting, or ways to look at and use your data at the local level, contact NFIRS Coordinator, Ms. Alicia Causey, at (360) 596-3924 or email her at NFIRS@wsp.wa.gov.

NFIRS

IS YOUR DEPARTMENT REPORTING?

INCIDENT REPORTING DATA

INCIDENT COUNTS

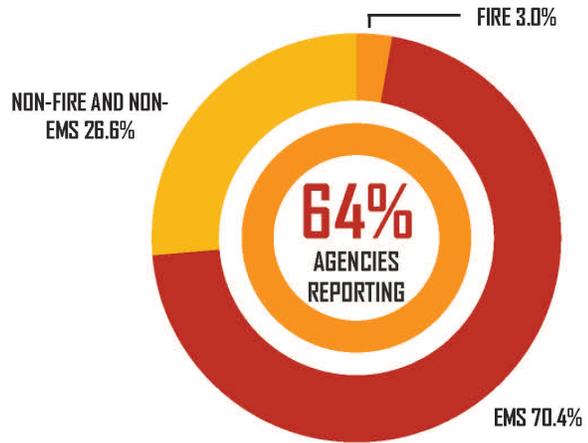
FIRE: **11,493**

EMS: **272,528**

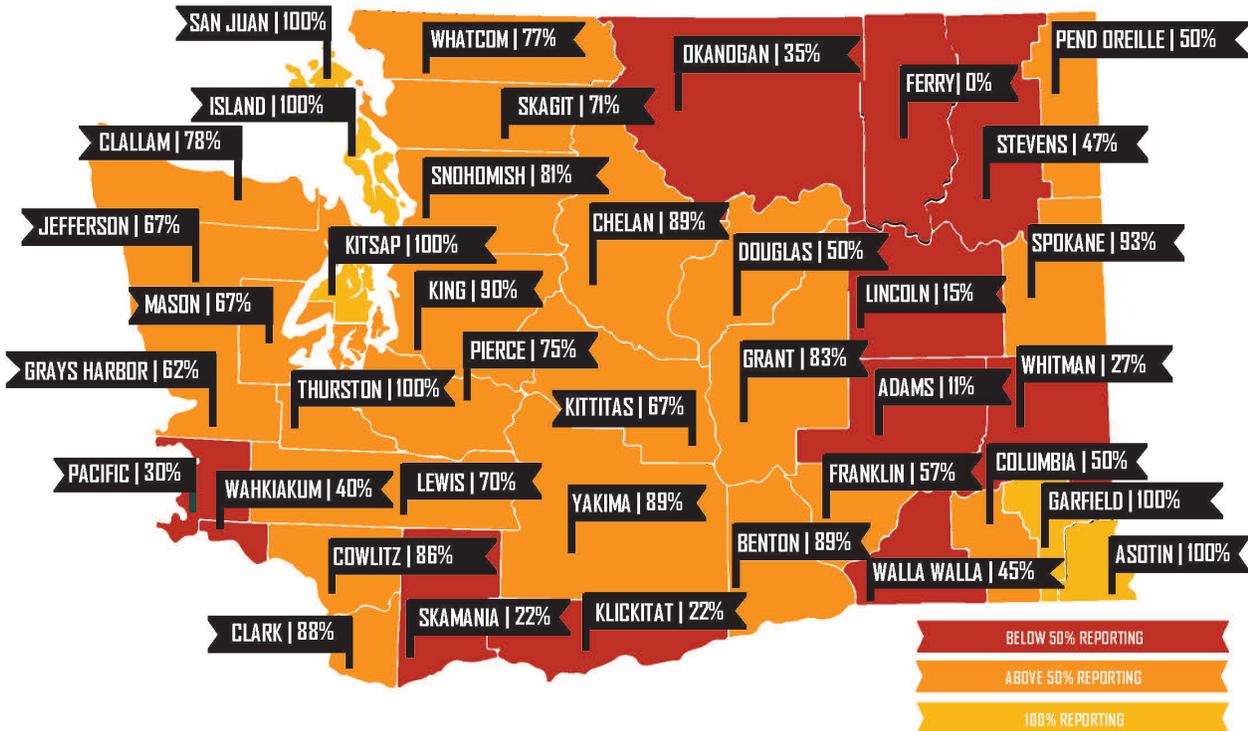
NON-FIRE/EMS: **102,981**

TOTAL REPORTED: **387,082**

INCIDENT TYPES



PERCENTAGE OF AGENCIES REPORTING TO NFIRS PER COUNTY



Periodic Life and Safety Inspections

Why does the SFMO conduct periodic fire and life safety inspections in some facility types and not others? The answer may depend on Washington State licensing and federal certification and accreditation requirements.

In addition to compliance with all zoning, building, and fire codes as required by the local authority having jurisdiction, some facilities, including nursing homes, hospitals, residential treatment facilities, assisted living facilities, and childcare centers, must meet state licensing and/or federal certification standards.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, establishes the fire and life safety code requirements for nursing homes and hospitals throughout the country. In conjunction with the Washington State Department of Health and the Department of Social and Health Services, the SFMO is responsible for conducting fire and life safety inspections in these facilities based on statutory and contractual requirements.

The Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families establishes licensing requirements, in addition to all locally-required standards, within childcare centers and group care facilities. Through a combination of statutory requirements and contractual agreements, the SFMO conducts initial and periodic fire and life safety inspections of these facilities.

The SFMO's goal is to provide the best level of public safety services in performing these inspections while honoring the autonomy and authority of local jurisdictions.

For questions or concerns regarding fire and life safety inspections in licensed Care Facilities, contact the Inspection Section at (360) 596-3947.

Occupancy Classification and Code Requirement Concerns Regarding State-licensed Group Care Facilities

Group Care Facilities, often referred to as Group Homes, are licensed by the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) under Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 110-145. Group Care Facilities are defined as providing care on a twenty-four hour basis of more than five children ages 17 or less. The type of care provided in these facilities may include custodial care, transitional living services, emergency respite services, and medical care, including the use of mechanical life support, for medically fragile children.

In accordance with [WAC 110-145-1355](#), Group Care Facilities must comply with all occupancy classification, zoning, building, and fire code regulations as required by the local authority having jurisdiction. Group Care Facilities do not undergo plan reviews by the Department of Health Construction Review Services or the SFMO, though the SFMO does conduct periodic licensing inspections in accordance with [WAC 110-145-1665](#).

Under the 2015 Washington State-Amended Fire and Building Codes, licensed Group Care Facilities are not automatically assigned an occupancy group, requiring the classification to be based solely on the type of care provided and number of children the care is provided for.

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Occupancy Classification and Code Requirement Concerns Regarding State-licensed Group Care Facilities

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For example, a group care facility for medically fragile children, located in an existing single family dwelling, can be licensed by DCYF for the care of at least six children requiring the use of mechanical ventilators. This scenario, because the facility is providing medical care to more than five persons who are incapable of self-preservation, would require classification under the State-amended Building Code as an I-2 facility, even though the building was constructed as a single family dwelling. Classification as an I-2 would then require the installation of a fire sprinkler system along with a manual and automatic fire alarm system. Additionally, an existing facility providing the type of care in this example could be subject to the retroactive fire sprinkler and fire alarm installation requirements for an I-2 occupancy under Chapter 11 of the Washington State-Amended Fire Code.

I-1	I-2	R-2	R-3
Structure used for care or supervision of more than 16 occupants who are incapable of self-preservation without physical assistance or are detained for correctional purposes.	Structures used for medical care on a 24-hour basis for more than five persons who are incapable of self-preservation.	Congregate living facilities (non-transient) with more than 16 occupants	Residential occupancies where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature and not classified as Group R-1, R-2 or I
Example: Group Care facility for 17 or more children undergoing court ordered detainment or rehabilitation services.	Example: Group Care facility for six or more children requiring the use of mechanical ventilators.	Example: Custodial Group Care facility caring for 17 or more children.	Example: Custodial Group Care facility caring for 6-16 children.

With the various levels of services provided in licensed Group Care Facilities, occupancy classification must be based on the level of care, and not the structure type, in order to provide the residents with the appropriate level of protection in the event of a fire.

For questions or concerns regarding Fire and Life Safety in licensed Group Care Facilities, contact the SFMO Plan Review Section at (360) 596-3948.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND TRAINING

Oct 17-18, 24-25: Fire Instructor I

North Bend, WA

Nov 2-6: Fire Instructor II

North Bend, WA

Nov 4-5: Health and Safety Program Manager

Kent, WA

email lkelly@mvfire for registration

Nov 16-21: Fire Officer II

North Bend, WA

Nov 21-22: NFA - Leadership in Supervision:

Creating Environments for Professional Growth

Kirkland, WA

Dec 10-11: NFA - Leadership in Supervision:

Perspectives in Thinking

Kirkland, WA

Dec 19-20: NFA - Leadership in Supervision:

Framework To Success

Kirkland, WA

The full FTA calendar is available [here](#).

The full fire sprinkler training calendar is available [here](#).

State Fire Marshal's Program Contacts

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