



GRANT COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 7

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

JUNE /July 2026

June/ July

1. Operational Overview

We concluded the month of June with 43 calls for service, as well as 28 calls over the fourth of July

During the July 4–5 peak-operational window, Grant County Fire District 7 responded to 20 distinct, fireworks-related wild land-urban interface (WUI) incidents over a continuous 15.5-hour operational period, achieving a 100% structure-defense success rate with zero civilian casualties or personnel injuries.

Operational conditions presented an extreme fire-behavior index, driven by ambient temperatures exceeding 90°F, relative humidity below 15%, and sustained north-northwest winds peaking at 35 mph across our 158-square-mile response footprint.

Due to the multi-incident concurrent dispatch environment, local staffing resources—consisting of our on-duty intern cohort and recalled volunteer personnel—were leveraged to maximum capacity, prompting the activation of regional mutual aid pacts including a all county all call which saved numerous homes and the towns water maintenance facility. Level one evacuations were ordered briefly until mutual aid arrived.

Notably, GCFD7 units coordinated with Grand Coulee Fire Department to execute rapid containment on a wind-driven, 150-acre third-alarm wildfire along the Highway 17 corridor north of Soap Lake, utilizing localized drafting operations to sustain fire-suppression water delivery in non-hydrant zones.

While the strategic decision to enforce the Soap Lake municipal fireworks ban and cancel the public display mitigated further urban ignitions, this high-density incident sequence exposed critical resource friction points, establishing a clear data justification for the Board to review peak-demand surge staffing allocations, auxiliary mobile water supply capabilities, and inter-agency radio interoperability enhancements in the upcoming fiscal cycle.

We had Nance Beston from the Columbia Basin Herald riding with us that evening who will be writing an entire article about our department, she was also providing a facebook live stream with minute by minute updates to keep the public informed.

I want to give a massive shout-out to our entire crew—both career and volunteer—for their incredible work over the 4th of July holiday.

This weekend pushed our department to the absolute limit. We faced a relentless surge in calls, extreme heat, and nonstop operational demands. While most people were enjoying fireworks and barbecues, our personnel were on the lines keeping this community safe.

Yesterday we completed our WSRB survey, we will give a report following a grading to the commission.

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2. Apparatus and Fleet

The new tender is currently nearing completion. We are focused on the final internal and mechanical checks to ensure everything meets our operational standards. A major component of the remaining work involves exterior finishing, specifically the application of reflective striping and departmental decals. Maintaining our brush and willand fleet has took presidentce over all projects, reflecting our commitment to readiness and reliability across all operational vehicles.

We have added an off-road forklift to the fleet, enhancing our capability to operate efficiently in rugged and uneven terrains where standard forklifts may not perform optimally.

We will be acquiring a 6x6 vehicle through the FEPP program; for this tactical tender build, we already have a tank and motor prepared, ensuring the unit will be fully equipped to meet the demands of complex emergency scenarios. We have equipped 7120 according to DNR specifications to ensure it is deployable for state mobilizations. This includes meeting all required safety standards, communication capabilities, and operational readiness criteria mandated by the department, allowing for seamless integration into statewide emergency response efforts.

3. Community Engagement

Tea with Chief

Each Thursday morning, residents could meet the members of staff at the Cloud View Cafe, a popular local establishment known for its welcoming atmosphere and delicious coffee.

We participated in the 4th of July Parade as well as the 3 on 3 basketball tournament; reports from the community indicated that this year was more organized than in previous years. A total of 20 teams competed, showcasing impressive skills and sportsmanship throughout the event. A huge shout out to Captain Boldman and CW for all their help and dedication to the event, whose efforts were instrumental in ng everything ran smoothly and successfully.



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4. Training

We continue to work on officer development and tactical skills during our officers meetings, focusing on enhancing leadership qualities, decision-making abilities, and operational effectiveness. We are methodically progressing through the book and lesson plan of "It's Your Ship" by Captain Michael Abrashoff, which provides valuable insights into leadership, accountability, and fostering a positive command climate.

Captain Babak has transitioned to a position at a data center, and we would like to express our gratitude for his hard work and dedication to GCFD #7. Our new training officer is Captain Friesen, who has promptly begun data entry and is developing a training schedule for the next six months. We will be contacting GCFD 13 in an effort to coordinate training schedules between both departments.

MPD- Update Dr. Hodges presented a comprehensive proposal along with a draft contract for EMS services to the EMS council. The County EMS council voted to accept the terms proposed by Dr. Hodges, and as of July 1st, he will serve as our new MPD. The contract specifies a cost structure estimating approximately \$22 per call for Basic Life Support (BLS) providers and \$44 per call for Advanced Life Support (ALS) providers. This pricing model is designed to cover operational expenses and ensure the sustainable delivery of services.

GCFD#7 participated in its first State Wildfire Mobilization, responding initially to the Garred RD fire and subsequently to the Humann Fire. These deployments have provided our crews with invaluable hands-on experience in wildfire suppression tactics and interagency coordination under real emergency conditions. Additionally, this participation has created an important supplementary revenue stream for the department, helping to support ongoing operational costs and future training initiatives.

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5. Grant Management

Management of all existing FEMA grants is a continuous and meticulous process that requires ongoing attention to detail and proactive oversight. We are diligently monitoring compliance and reporting requirements for each grant, including deadlines, documentation standards, and performance metrics, to ensure optimal utilization of the allocated funds and strict adherence to all federal guidelines. This comprehensive approach helps prevent any potential issues related to fund mismanagement or non-compliance. Additionally, we have applied for the FEMA Safer grant for another 5 years, specifically targeting recruitment and retention efforts to strengthen our workforce and maintain operational readiness.

6. Looking Ahead

- Continue severity staffing for Red Flag warnings
- Prepare for the upcoming EMS levy.
- Implement Capital Improvement projects- Bathrooms/ Painting Station 2.
- Participate in Summer Community Events.

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