GRANT COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 7

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

October 2026

October

1. Operational Overview

We successfully concluded the month of September with a total of 41 emergency calls for service, ranging from structural fire responses and medical incidents to motor vehicle accidents and public assistance calls across our jurisdiction.

Fire Prevention Week was a resounding success this year, featuring an engaging annual school assembly and interactive educational activities specifically tailored for local 3rd-grade students. In addition to focused classroom instruction on fire safety and home escape plans, the event included a comprehensive static vehicle display showcasing essential firefighting equipment, tools, protective gear, and apparatus to foster early fire safety awareness and community trust.

We have successfully submitted all final pieces of information to the Washington Surveying and Rating Bureau (WSRB), completing all required documentation and data verification processes. We are eagerly anticipating our updated protection class grading in the coming weeks, which reflects our ongoing efforts to optimize district resources and capabilities.

Work on our bathroom remodel is actively underway. We extend our sincere gratitude to Lucas Naves for his exceptional dedication and effort throughout every phase of the project. His detailed planning, coordination, and execution have been vital in improving both the overall functionality and design of the facility.

Captain Boldman attended the IFSAC Fire and Life Safety Educator I Course in Everett, successfully passing both the written exam and practical evaluations. Completing this certification fulfills a key requirement that directly contributes points toward improving the district's WSRB fire protection rating.

Amber and I participated in the WFCA conference held in Spokane.

We have finalized a formal partnership agreement with Columbia Basin Hospital to join their Resuscitation Quality Improvement (RQI) program. Under this initiative, our clinical personnel will perform continuous quarterly simulation modules to verify CPR, ACLS, and PALS competencies, establishing higher standards of care while eliminating the administrative burden and downtime of traditional biennial recertification classes.

Commissioner McKiernan and I met for an initial budget workshop on September 25th to review financial frameworks, projected revenues, and line-item expenditures for the 2026 fiscal year. The session focused on establishing a realistic budget to support district operations, incorporating staff input for capital priorities, and aligning on strategic fiscal targets—including building a six-month operating reserve.

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2. Apparatus and Fleet

The new tender is rapidly nearing completion as our mechanics conduct thorough final mechanical, electrical, and pumping system checks to guarantee it fully satisfies our district's operational standards. Final exterior detail work is actively underway, including the placement of official departmental decals, high-visibility reflective striping, and emergency lighting configurations. Throughout these specialized build efforts, maintaining our core wildland and brush fire fleet has remained a top operational priority, ensuring continuous readiness and dependability across all response vehicles.

Captain Harper has been diligently working at the maintenance facility, focusing on the critical tasks of winterizing the department's apparatus and thoroughly preparing the facility for winter storage. This comprehensive effort ensures that all fire and rescue vehicles are protected from harsh winter conditions and remain in peak operational readiness.

3. Community Engagement
Tea with Chief

Each Thursday morning, district residents had the opportunity to meet informally with command staff and personnel at the Cloud View Cafe—a popular local establishment recognized for its welcoming atmosphere. These sessions provided a transparent, open forum for community members to discuss fire safety concerns, ongoing district projects, and local initiatives.

We conducted comprehensive fire extinguisher training for the staff at McKay Healthcare, emphasizing hands-on practice with the PASS method (Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep), proper hazard identification, and workplace evacuation protocols. We are proud to continue this amazing partnership with McKay to ensure a safe, prepared environment for both staff and residents.

Our team actively engaged with community members by hosting an interactive static display at the annual Fall Bazaar. The display featured key apparatus, life safety educational materials, and protective equipment, allowing residents of all ages to learn more about district operations and fire prevention. Building on this success, we are planning a collaborative partnership with the Soap Lake Police Department for the upcoming Trunk-or-Treat event. This initiative aims to foster a safe, family-friendly environment for local youth while strengthening public safety partnerships and

community connections.

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4. Training

We conducted a highly successful multi-agency extrication training session with Elite Extrication & Equipment, inviting our mutual aid partners from Grant County Fire Districts 3 and 13 to participate. The hands-on training focused on advanced vehicle extrication tactics using modern e-Draulic tools and chain slings delivered during the session. Hosting this joint drill served as an excellent opportunity to align tactical procedures, foster seamless interagency communication, and build strong mutual trust across departments.

The Soap Lake Resort has generously donated an acquired residential structure to the district for practical training purposes. While live-fire burns will not be conducted at this site, the facility provides an invaluable real-world environment for hands-on operational drills. Personnel will perform extensive search and rescue operations, primary and secondary search tactics, and vertical and horizontal ventilation scenarios throughout the structure prior to its scheduled demolition.

Currently, the district has two members attending the Columbia River Academy and five members enrolled in the City of Ephrata Academy. Both cohorts are making steady progress through their core curriculum, developing essential skills in firefighting tactics, rescue operations, and emergency response to bolster our operational readiness upon graduation.

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5. **Grant Management**

In partnership with Elite Extrication & Equipment, we hosted a highly effective multi-agency vehicle extrication training session alongside our mutual aid partners from Grant County Fire Districts 3 and 13. The hands-on drills emphasized modern e-Draulic tools and newly delivered chain slings to refine advanced extrication tactics. This joint exercise provided an invaluable opportunity to align tactical operations, strengthen interagency communication, and build mutual trust across neighboring departments.

The Soap Lake Resort generously donated an acquired residential structure to support our practical training initiatives. Although live-fire exercises will not occur at this location, the site offers an exceptional real-world setting for operational

drills. Prior to the building's scheduled demolition, personnel will conduct comprehensive search and rescue scenarios, execute primary and secondary search tactics, and practice vertical and horizontal ventilation techniques.

Our recruit training pipeline remains active, with two members currently enrolled in the Columbia River Academy and five members attending the City of Ephrata Academy. Both cohorts are advancing steadily through their foundational coursework, mastering critical emergency response, rescue, and firefighting skills to reinforce our overall operational readiness upon graduation.

5. Grant Management

Active oversight and administrative management of all existing FEMA grant awards remain vital to our operations. We continuously monitor compliance, reporting schedules, performance metrics, and documentation standards to guarantee full fiscal responsibility, maximize federal funding efficiency, and prevent mismanagement or non-compliance issues. Furthermore, we have submitted an application for a five-year FEMA SAFER grant to support our long-term volunteer recruitment and retention initiatives.

Looking Ahead

- ► Finish Capital Improvement Projects
- ► Finalize Budget
- ► Prepare apparatus facility for cold weather
- ► Work on hiring timeline if levy measure is successful.