

News From the Ellsburg Volunteer Fire Department 2016.12

Our December meeting took place on December 7, 2016 at 7 pm at the Bass Lake Firehall. Nominations were taken for officers for 2017. Elections will take place at our January meeting. Our point system was reviewed to make sure everyone has a good chance to receive the points necessary to earn a good year. Our department is looking into various grant and funding programs. We desperately need funds to purchase the life-saving SCBA's . We are a small department with a low call volume and that is hampering our eligibility for some grants. We need more residents to volunteer to be firefighters. Another firefighter course is starting soon in this area. Please consider joining our department! Call me at 218-591-9228 if you are interested.

At this cold time of year, when furnaces and fireplaces are in constant use, it is important to keep your chimneys clear. There have already been several chimney fires. January is a good time to change the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. It is also a good idea to vacuum or dust the detectors so that they can actually sense smoke and gas. Dispose of your Christmas trees before they become a fire hazard. A dry tree can ignite and go up in flames in less than a minute. It can turn into a torch for nearby furniture and curtains. Be prepared. Be safe.

Residents of our township generally do not let cold temperatures keep them indoors. Frostbite is a serious condition that can occur if a person's skin is exposed unprotected to the cold. Wet clothing, or too tight clothing, can also contribute to frostbite. Touching ice, cold packs, or frozen metal are also factors. The skin, as well as the tissue just below the skin, freezes. Frostbite can happen quickly. It can even occur at a mild temperature of 35°F if there is a wind-chill factor. The nose, cheeks, chin, ears, fingers, and toes are usually the first areas to become frostbitten. First, the area becomes numb and then turns a bright red color. Without attention, the area will turn white and lose feeling and sensation. If warmed at this point, the area will tingle. Superficial frostbitten areas should be warmed quickly but carefully. Place fingers and hands in armpits. Cover faces, toes, and ears with warm hands and blankets. Never rub a frostbitten area. Because of numbness, a person may not realize that frostbite is occurring. Deep frostbite is characterized by skin that has turned white and waxy and feels firm or frozen. The area begins to swell and blisters may develop. Joints or muscles may no longer function in the area. As the area warms, the skin turns mottled and blue signifying a loss of circulation. It will turn black and hard as the tissue dies. Do not break blisters, rub, or apply heat to a deeply frostbitten area. Call 911. The victim must get to a hospital quickly. Frostbite can be prevented by limiting the amount of time that you are exposed to cold, wet, or windy conditions and dressing properly. Dress in layers of loose, warm clothing with undergarments that wick moisture away from your skin. Change out of wet clothing quickly. Wear a hat that completely covers your ears. Wear mittens instead of gloves, or wear a pair of glove liners under your gloves. Wear socks and sock liners that wick moisture, insulate, and are not too tight. If you use hand or foot warmers, make sure that they don't make your gloves or boots too tight. Alcohol causes your body to lose heat faster, so avoid alcoholic beverages if you plan to be outside for awhile. Stay hydrated by drinking warm, sweet beverages such as hot chocolate. Keep moving to keep your circulation flowing. Plan ahead when you go outdoors and you will have a safe and enjoyable time. As always, if something goes wrong, call 911. We are ready to help you.

Heidi Yokel
Secretary, EVFD