



## **Chief's Report**

**June 26, 2025**

### **Mission**

Save Lives, Protect Property, Safeguard the Environment, and Take Care of People

### **Vision**

We will be a proactive regional emergency services leader by partnering to provide safe communities for people to live, work, and explore.

### **Guiding Values**

Respect, Accountability, Integrity, Teamwork, Service

## **OPERATIONS**

### **Significant Alarms**

#### **Wildland Fire**

On June 29, Snohomish Regional Fire & Rescue (SRFR), along with mutual aid and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) units, responded to a wildland fire along State Route 522.

The initial dispatch was for a reported grass fire in the West Battalion. While crews were on the way, the incident was upgraded to a brush fire response, prompting additional resources, including East Battalion. First-arriving crews initiated fire control and successfully slowed the spread. Command was established, and teams were strategically assigned to key operational areas, including structure protection at the head of the fire.

Thanks to the coordinated efforts of SRFR, mutual aid partners, and DNR crews, the fire was quickly contained, and no structures were impacted. Excellent work by all involved in preventing further spread.

#### **Water Rescue Response**

The evening of June 12, SRFR units were dispatched to Eagle Falls on the Skykomish River for a report of a 19-year-old male who witnesses said was drowning. According to a friend on scene, the individual had been swimming and "just sank."

The East Battalion responded with a swiftwater technician and a rescue swimmer. Battalion 31 also self-assigned and brought an additional off-duty rescue swimmer, Pete Parrish, who had just completed water training earlier that day. SRFR employees Fil Norris and Brandon Neville also responded off duty, Norris while driving and Neville from home, both of whom had also spent the day training with the water team.



Upon arrival, SRFR found that command had been established by Sky Valley Fire. Two kayaks were deployed as spotters for the off-duty SRFR rescue swimmers. The search was conducted in a systematic manner, guided by witness reports, shoreline spotters, and kayak-based observations. The victim was located in approximately 10 feet of water, close to the last seen point. He was removed to shore, where CPR was initiated and care transferred to Sky Valley Fire. Despite CPR efforts by all on scene, the rescued swimmer did not survive. The scene was later turned over to Sky Valley Fire and the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office.

The commitment and willingness of our members, especially those who responded while off duty, demonstrate the strength of character and dedication we are fortunate to have within our organization. Please take a moment to recognize Pete Parrish, Brandon Neville, and Fil Norris for stepping up in a time of need. Also, credit goes to on-duty diver Huber, who conducted the underwater recovery, and all SRFR members who gave their best on a difficult call.

### **Leading by Example**

Travis Rask was recently recognized as the 2025 *International F.O.O.L. of the Year* by the Fraternal Order of Leatherheads Society (F.O.O.L.S.) at their recent annual convention.

The F.O.O.L.S. mission is to honor the brotherhood and sisterhood of the fire service by providing training, organizing support for firefighters and their families, and serving local communities. The organization exists to strengthen the bonds of our profession and fuel the passion we have for our calling.

The *International F.O.O.L. of the Year* award recognizes a member who fully embodies that mission, someone who actively promotes the values of the F.O.O.L.S. both within and beyond their chapter, brings new members into the organization, helps establish new chapters, and leads by example through professionalism and service. Travis has done all of this and more. His dedication to the fire service and the F.O.O.L.S. community is evident in everything he does, and this recognition is truly well deserved. Congratulations, Travis! SRFR is proud to have you.

### **Emergency Medical Services**

#### **Airway Recognition**

Snohomish County EMS Agency (SCEMSA) has recognized Paramedic Matt Ball for his outstanding contributions in airway management. SCEMSA shared the following statement, "Matt has demonstrated continuous airway development, training, and leadership. He has assisted and led in top airway practices that lead the county, if not the state." Well done, Matt. Thank you for your dedication and hard work!

#### **MSO Testing and Promotion**

Congratulations to all the candidates who participated in the first MSO testing process. Your professionalism and dedication throughout the process were truly appreciated. Following the



completion of the Chiefs' interviews, John Rouse was selected and has been offered the position. Congratulations to MSO Rouse on this well-deserved accomplishment!

### **CWU Graduation**

We are proud to announce that Costas Zweekhorst has successfully completed Central Washington University's Paramedic Program, a milestone that highlights his dedication, perseverance, and commitment to growth within emergency medical services. We look forward to welcoming PM Zweekhorst back to SRFR on June 30 as he begins his return-to-work onboarding. This achievement is a moment of pride for both Costas and our organization, and we're excited to have him rejoin the team as he embarks on this next phase of his EMS career.

### **Training**

#### **Lithium Ion Fires**

The Training Alliance of Snohomish County recently completed the Multi-Company Operations training focused on tactics for managing electric vehicle fires.

#### **Snohomish County Truck Academy**

The Snohomish County Truck Academy took place during the first week of June, with much of the training conducted at the North County Training Facility. We were proud to have a strong group of instructors representing SRFR. A big thank you to Chad Berg, Kirk Dunham, Sam Langheld, Neil Merritt, Bobby Lowe, Brad Gilbert, and Dillon Clinton for their dedication and expertise.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Community Relations**

#### **Chamber of Commerce Membership Meetings**

The June 4 Sky Valley Chamber Membership Luncheon was attended by Assistant Chief Messer, Assistant Fire Marshal Bowen, and Deputy Fire Marshal Dahl. The discussion focused on business fire safety and common fire inspection challenges faced by local businesses.

The June 11 Lake Stevens Chamber Membership Luncheon was attended by Commissioner Elmore, Assistant Chief Messer, Deputy Chief Rasmussen, Deputy Chief McConnell, and Program Specialist Larson. The featured topic was "Boeing in Washington," presented by Rich White, Senior Manager of Government Operations.

### **Logistics**

#### **Stations 32 and 81**

We are entering Phase 1C of our design-build contract with BN Builders and Miller Hull for Stations 32 and 81, which will carry us through the design phase. This phase is expected to continue until May 2026. Upon completion of the design phase, we anticipate moving these projects into the construction phase.



## **Station 72**

We have addressed all conditions outlined by AWD in their letter responding to our initial submittal, and we are resubmitting the revised plans for their approval.

## **Fleet**

Last week, SRFR members traveled to Idaho to take delivery of the new Boat 31, a 21-foot SJX Jet Boat. This beautiful boat will be a valuable and much-needed addition to our fleet.



## **Office of the Fire Marshal**

On June 23, the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) responded to a reported explosion involving liquid nitrogen. Upon arrival, it was confirmed that the vessel involved was a liquid nitrogen dewar. The dewar had been in the process of being filled via direct transfer from a liquid nitrogen supply tank. This type of transfer does not regulate pressure between the storage tank and the dewar, meaning the dewar is filled at the same pressure as the Liquid Nitrogen Storage (LNS) tank, creating the potential for overpressurization.

The OFM notified the Department of Labor and Industries, Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), which dispatched inspectors to the scene. An active investigation by DOSH is currently underway. A stop work order was issued on the liquid nitrogen storage system. The OFM is working closely with the business owner to ensure compliance with fire code requirements for the safe storage and handling of liquid nitrogen.

Remember, the Office of the Fire Marshal is a resource available to you for any incident that raises concern or falls outside your area of expertise. If we do not have the answer, we likely know someone who does.





Below are images of a similar intact tank and the damaged tank found at the scene.



Take care and stay safe,

Office of the Fire Chief