



## **Chief's Report**

**July 10, 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**

### **Promotion**

Effective July 1, Matt Millich has been promoted to the rank of Driver/Operator. Congratulations, Matt, on your well-earned career milestone!

### **Thank You Letter from a Community Member**

#### **A Lifesaving Thank You**

SRFR recently received a thoughtful letter of appreciation from a colleague at a neighboring agency, recognizing the efforts of our team during a CPR save at a Lake Stevens restaurant on June 27. A gentleman suffered cardiac arrest, and bystanders immediately began CPR. Upon arrival, SRFR crews took over care, continuing life-saving efforts. The patient was successfully resuscitated, transported to Providence for further treatment, and was discharged from the hospital on June 30. Thank you to all crew members involved!

We are grateful to our colleague for reaching out and sharing their appreciation. It is an honor to serve our community.

### **Significant Alarms**

#### **Mutual Aid Fire**

On the evening of June 24, units from the East Battalion responded to Snohomish County Fire District 5 (SCFD5) for a confirmed residential fire. The fire, located on the second floor and involving two bedrooms, had begun spreading into the attic.

SCFD5 took command of the incident, ensured a steady water supply, and quickly applied an initial attack on the side of the home while stretching a line to the front for an interior attack.



Snohomish Regional Fire & Rescue's (SRFR) East Battalion arrived and began supporting fire suppression efforts.

The homeowner provided critical information about the house layout and stair locations, which helped crews anticipate the floor plan and the location of the stairs. Upon entry, firefighters encountered heavy clutter, which slowed their progress toward the fire.

Ten minutes into the response, crews had not yet reached the second floor or applied water directly to the fire. At this point, the stairs had been located but were difficult to navigate. Once cleared, crews advanced to the second floor and launched a focused attack on the fire. Meanwhile, additional crews ventilated the roof, significantly improving interior visibility. After successfully controlling the fire, an extensive overhaul was conducted, with crews cycling through multiple air bottles to ensure the fire was fully extinguished.

Great job by all crews!



### July 4 Call Summary

It was a fairly busy Fourth of July, as noted below:

- 88 total calls for service with SRFR.
- 39 calls for service in the North Battalion. Of those 39 North Battalion calls, Station 81 ran 22 of them.
- Four confirmed residential structure fires.
  - Three of the four had great quick stops. The fires were contained to the outside of the structures, and only the siding or decks (and bushes) were affected.



- Excellent job by the crews who deployed quickly and aggressively to keep the fires from spreading to the interiors of the structures.
  - One of the four fires extended up the siding into the attic. This fire occurred in the morning, near shift change.
- 14 of the 38 calls were related to fireworks.
  - All those calls occurred between 2000-0800 hours.
- Brush 81 (upstaffed for the holiday) was utilized on seven firework-related incidents.
  - They were able to respond quickly and get water on fires without the delay faced by the Engines.
- MedX in the East Battalion for a walk-in at Station 33. The patient arrived at Station 33 with a hand blown off by homemade fireworks.

### **Residential Fire Response**

On July 5, units from SRFR's North Battalion, West Battalion, including West Battalion's MSO, Everett Fire Department, and Snohomish County Fire District 4 (SCFD4) responded to a report of a bush fire in the front yard next to a house, with flames approximately one foot high and residents evacuating. Shortly after, a neighbor called 911 again to report that the roof of the house was on fire. SNOCOM upgraded the call to a confirmed residential fire.

North Battalion arrived first to find a small, two-story home with an active attic fire. A thorough 360-degree assessment was conducted, and a line was stretched through the front door to the second floor. Crews began pulling ceilings and attacking the fire from below. SCFD4 arrived, supplied tank water, established a water supply, and prepared for vertical ventilation. A search of the entire structure was completed with no victims found. Everett Fire Department's Ladder 1 evaluated the possible need for vertical ventilation. After assessing the roof as spongy and unsafe, and consulting with SRFR's North Battalion crew, it was determined that vertical ventilation was unnecessary. Fire crews conducted a complete overhaul, pulling most of the second-floor ceiling to ensure all fire was extinguished.

After conducting a thorough investigation, the Fire Marshal determined the fire originated from smoldering bark caused by fireworks the previous night, which ignited an adjacent evergreen shrub. The fire then extended into the attic through a bird block. Power and gas were secured by Snohomish County PUD and Puget Sound Energy, and the Red Cross was notified at the homeowner's request. Board-up services were arranged through dispatch. The homeowner was assisted in removing belongings from the unaffected first floor and garage. Thanks to everyone involved for a strong response and efficient collaboration!

### **Emergency Medical Services**

#### **CARES Update**

SRFR's Community Resource Paramedic (CRP) has successfully completed multiple training programs aimed at strengthening integrated health response, behavioral health intervention, and community care coordination.



The 40-week POISE Frontline Responder Academy, hosted by BHCore in partnership with University of Washington's School of Social Work, provided in-depth instruction on the POISE framework: Prepare, Observe, Intervene, Support, and Evaluate; equipping frontline responders with practical, field-ready tools to support individuals in behavioral health crisis. SRFR trained alongside peer teams from Seattle Fire, Bellevue Fire, Eastside Fire & Rescue, Renton RFA, Valley RFA, Puget Sound RFA, Shoreline Fire, South County Fire, North County Fire, Issaquah PD, Bellevue PD, and others, strengthening regional partnerships with a unified approach to behavioral and integrated health response.

CRP Wigington and DC Read also attended the Co-Responder Outreach Alliance (CROA) Annual Co-Response Conference in SeaTac. Topics included trauma-informed care, neurobiological strategies for trauma recovery, stress-reduction techniques, and self-compassion practices for first responders. Workshops addressed challenges such as self-neglect in older adults, hoarding behaviors, and suicide prevention.

In addition, CRP Wigington completed the 30-hour Community Health Worker Training Program through the Washington State Department of Health. This course focused on key community health competencies, including communication, advocacy, service navigation, outreach, education, and care coordination. The program also emphasized community assessment, capacity-building, and an integrated approach to health and social service delivery.

These trainings represent SRFR's continued commitment to building regional partnerships and enhancing our capacity to respond effectively and compassionately to complex health and social needs in the field. In Quarter 3, training will include information on how to properly submit referrals, and a brief overview of this new program will be provided.

### **EMS Training**

The training alliance recently completed eight OTEP sessions for Q2 and eight CAM classes serving SRFR, SCFD4, and South County Fire (SCF). These sessions received positive feedback from participants, highlighting the quality and relevance of the training. Additionally, SRFR instructors contributed their expertise by assisting in teaching the first countywide CAM class of the year, further strengthening regional collaboration and skills development.

### **Training**

#### **Congratulations to Acting Lieutenants**

The Training Division is proud to announce that Cary Cronin, Jacob Eldredge, and Benjamin Bloomquist have successfully completed all required qualifications to serve as Acting Lieutenants. Please join us in congratulating them on this achievement. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to stepping into these leadership roles in support of the department and your crews.





### **Operations Water Rescue Training**

SRFR and SCFD4 recently partnered to conduct operations-level water rescue training at Flowing Lake. This training reinforced foundational rescue skills in aquatic environments and emphasized effective interagency coordination.

Lieutenant Joe Virnig led the training with strong support from instructors Alex Wolfe, Adam Perron, Bill Gunterman, Brandon Neville, and Brandon Fairhurst, representing both departments. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this training successful and impactful.

### **Health & Safety**

#### **PPE Dryers**

To further support firefighter health and reduce carcinogen exposure, the Health and Safety Division has purchased two additional turnout gear dryers, one for Station 82 and one for Station 33. The PPE dryer at Station 33 is a portable unit that does not require dedicated ventilation, as the decontamination room is equipped with continuous ventilation to safely manage airborne contaminants. The dryer at Station 82 will be installed with dedicated venting to the exterior, ensuring contaminants are safely exhausted outside the station. A portion of the funding for these dryers is being provided through a grant from the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries' FIIRE (Firefighter Injury and Illness Reduction) program. Both additions support best practices for gear maintenance, reduce turnaround time, and align with our department's ongoing cancer prevention efforts.

#### **Plymovent Exhaust Removal System**

Station 82 and Station 83 are scheduled to receive the direct source capture exhaust system, a critical upgrade that underscores our commitment to firefighter health and safety. This system significantly reduces exposure to harmful diesel exhaust by capturing emissions directly at the source, the tailpipes, and venting them safely outside the apparatus bay. Implementing this technology aligns with national best practices and reinforces our broader efforts to create and maintain cleaner, safer working environments for our crews. Thank you to Facilities and Logistics for managing this project!

### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

#### **Strategic Analysis**

##### **Strategic Planning Sessions**

Strategic planning is officially underway at SRFR. From June 25–27, Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) facilitated the initial phase of the process. On the evening of June 25, ESCI led a strategic planning session with members of our Community Advisory Committee, gathering valuable input and perspectives from our community stakeholders. Internal planning sessions followed on June 26 and 27, with participation from staff members across the district. These collaborative discussions mark the beginning of a thoughtful and inclusive process to guide the department's priorities and direction in the years ahead.



### **Thank You for Your Partnership**

As I step away from my role as Fire Chief, I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you. Serving alongside such a dedicated, professional, and compassionate team has been one of the greatest honors of my career.

Your unwavering commitment to the mission, your resilience in the face of adversity, and your support for one another and our community have inspired me. I am proud of what we have accomplished together and confident that SRFR will continue to be a leader in our craft.

It is with honor that we welcome Chief Brian Park to the organization. Chief Park brings a wealth of experience, integrity, and vision to this role. I have no doubt that under his leadership, SRFR will continue to thrive and reach new heights.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your Chief. I will always carry with me the memories, the lessons, and the pride of being part of this incredible team.

Please take care of each other, be safe, and have fun serving in the best job in the world.

With profound gratitude,

Kevin O'Brien, Fire Chief