



2024

ANNUAL REPORT



**CAMANO ISLAND
FIRE AND RESCUE**

OUR SERVICE AREA



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INTRODUCTION

Our primary purpose at Camano Island Fire and Rescue is to protect and serve our community - their lives, property, and environment. Our annual report is a chance to review the past year's performance, highlight notable events and successes, and share information about our department.

We are the only elected body that specifically serves Camano Island. We are proud of our dedication and commitment to our community, and our ability to support their health and well-being.

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS



Camano Island Fire and Rescue is governed by a board of five Fire Commissioners elected to serve six-year terms. The Board is responsible for financial oversight of the district, and helps develop its overall strategic plan and its long term vision. Working closely with the administrative staff, the Board ensures a balanced budget and guides the District through the adoption of policies and procedures.

In addition to their work for the residents of Camano Island, Board members are also actively involved in State and County associations that address issues related to the delivery of fire and emergency medical services.



FROM OUR FIRE CHIEF



More so than in past years, 2024 was a year of change and growth for the organization. As our island population continues to grow, so too does the demand for our services. Meeting the evolving needs of our

community requires strategic leadership, ongoing training, and a strong commitment to our mission.

One of our key initiatives in 2024 was the addition of Battalion Chiefs to our daily shift staffing plan. By reassigning administrative tasks, we've strengthened our team and improved our emergency response. Giving our Battalion Chiefs more responsibilities helps our officers grow as leaders while also making sure we have an extra responder on

duty each day to keep our community safe.

We made significant progress on the promises we made to the community when they supported our fire levy lid lift in 2023. This year, we staffed a second aid unit at our Mabana fire station each day. We also added 10 new career firefighters, 2 of whom are also paramedics, and sent two of our current firefighters to paramedic school. Investing in our employees is essential because they are the foundation of our success. When we take care of them, they're better equipped to take care of our community.

Progress is slow but consistent on our work to renovate the Mabana Fire Station. We are planning to build temporary staff quarters - to allow for overnight staffing - while simultaneously moving forward with plans and permitting to build a new station adjacent to the existing facility.

Finally, in December, I announced my resignation as Fire Chief. It has been a privilege to serve this community for the past five years. This department is well-positioned for the future, and I know that you are in great hands with our incoming chief, Chief Allen.



OUR MISSION

We work as a team to serve, protecting you and your property.

OUR VISION

The safest rural community in the state – a model of excellence in service



OUR VALUES

SELFLESS SERVICE

- We put others first
- We always act with compassion and empathy
- We act with courage, choosing action over personal comfort

HUMILITY

- We encourage
- We recognize strengths and work at improving weaknesses
- We are genuinely curious; we ask questions so we can learn
- We get better every shift

INTEGRITY

- We live up to the values of CIFR
- We are honest and have no hidden agendas
- We do what we say we are going to do
- We fulfill our promises

TRUST/RELIABILITY

- We work at being reliable
- We communicate directly regardless of rank
- We go to the source
- We approach one another with genuine, respectful curiosity

RESPECT/PROFESSIONALISM

- We recognize the inherent value in those we serve
- We always act professionally
- We always put our best foot forward
- We are constantly improving ourselves

STEWARDSHIP

- We take care of it better than if we owned it
- We always leave it better than we found it

CAMANO ISLAND

50

firefighters*

11

paramedics

5

elected
commissioners

9

administrative
& maintenance
personnel

* Includes career,
part-time &
volunteer firefighters

17,235
population

39.8
square miles



2024 NOTABLE EVENTS

Winter

House fire response



Along with crews from North County, Camano Fire responded to a suspected lithium-ion battery fire that destroyed a home on the north end.

Spring



Annual marine rescue training

New hires and members of neighboring agencies spent three days before the start of boating season doing intensive marine rescue training at the State Park.



Summer

Grant funds new radios

A \$170,000 grant from the Stillaguamish Tribe helped the department buy 41 new portable radios to better communicate with Snohomish County agencies.



September

AC Helgeland retires

After 34 years with Camano Fire, Asst. Chief Helgeland retired on Sept. 30. He was the department's longest-serving member & led key functions like fire station operational maintenance and fire investigations.

Fall

Pickleball fundraiser

Camano Fire hosted its first ever Firefighter Pickleball Battle with proceeds benefiting the Washington State Council of Firefighters Burn Foundation.

Firefighters from across the region participated, raising more than \$8,000 for the foundation.



December

Record-setting Santa Run again

Residents donated 2,022 lbs of food, \$809 in cash/checks, and \$395 in gift cards during the four-day Santa Run, beating record-setting 2023 totals by \$500 and 20 lbs.

Our people are our greatest asset

Each year we welcome new firefighters and say farewell to others. We take pride in hiring and retaining people who embody the values of our department and provide professional, selfless service to the residents of our community.

New hires

Winter

- F/T FF Urrego
- F/T FF Tcheng
- F/T FF Sharp
- F/T FF Fazekas
- F/T FF Yengoyan
- F/T FF Levitsis
- P/T FF Roodzant
- P/T FF Munson
- P/T FF M. Marker

Summer

- F/T Paramedic Robinson
- F/T FF Evans
- P/T FF Lee

Fall

- F/T FF Copeland
- F/T FF Devries
- P/T FF Kristensen

Farewells

- A.C. Helgeland retired in September after serving the department for 34 years
- Medical Services Officer Smith retired in December after serving the department for 20 years

Accomplishments



May

FFs Sharp, Levitsis, Urrego & Yengoyan completed fire academy

June

Ceremony honoring new BCs Olsen, Larkin, & McCoy; Cpts. Mezzzone, Carlson & Mauck, Paramedics Easter, McIntosh, & Fox-Ramey

July

FFs Peloquin, Tcheng & Fazekas completed probation

December

FFs Copeland, Devries & Evans, & paramedic Robinson completed fire academy; paramedic Shockley completed academy and probation; paramedic Hansen graduated paramedic school

2024 by the numbers



2,417

TOTAL CALLS
FOR SERVICE



OF THOSE CALLS...

730

WERE
OVERLAPPING
CALLS

WHICH WAS

30%

OF ALL
OUR CALLS

CALLS BY TYPE



37

FIRES



22

MARINE CALLS



1,776

RESCUE/EMS



207

SERVICE CALL*



52

HAZARDOUS
CONDITIONS



103

FALSE ALARM



219

GOOD INTENT**



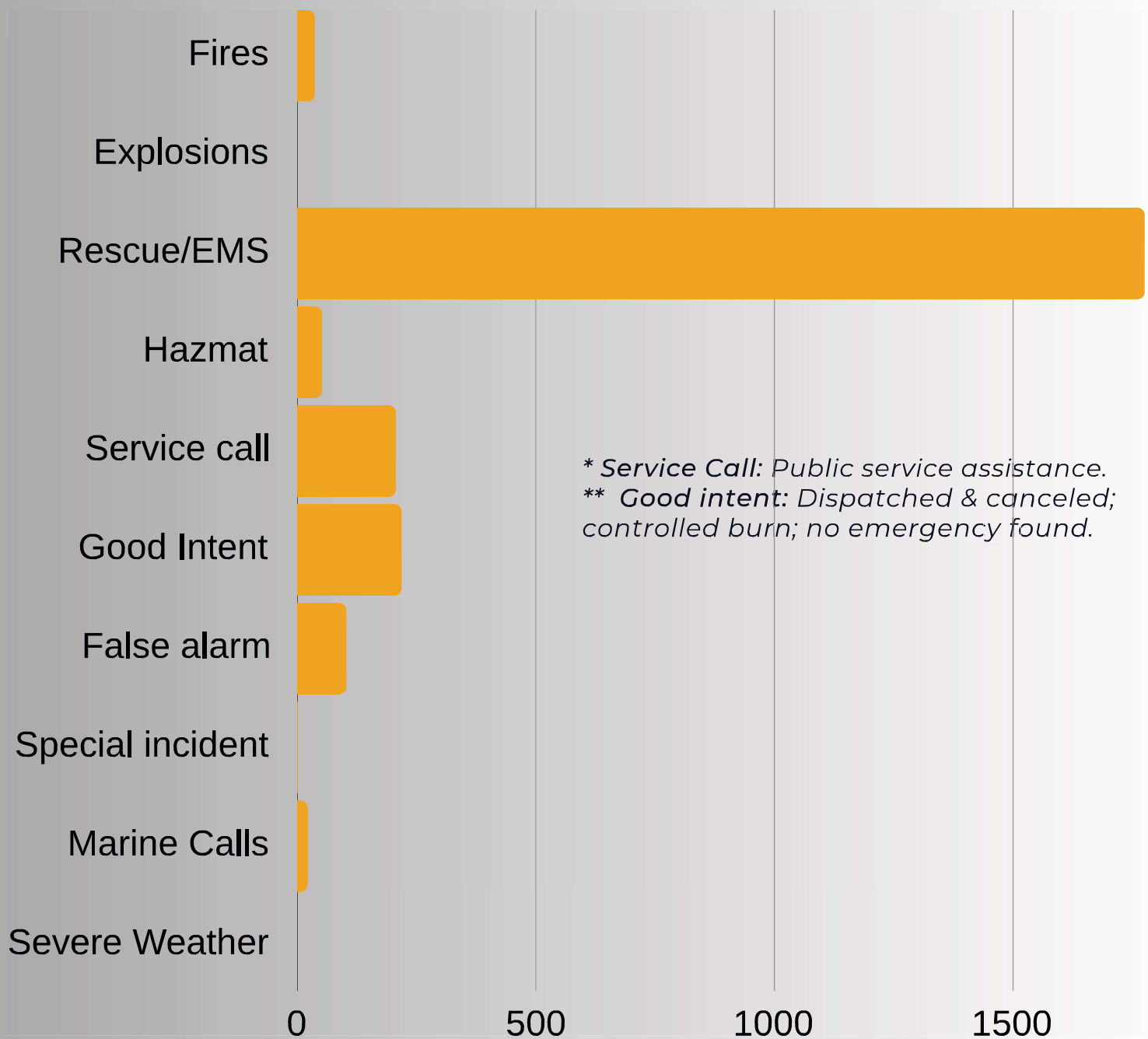
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SPECIAL
INCIDENT

* Service Call: Public service assistance.

** Good intent: Dispatched & canceled; controlled burn; no emergency found.

2024 INCIDENT TYPES



2,417

Number of
dispatched calls

71

Mutual aid
given

65

Mutual aid
received



RESPONSE TIMELINE

CIFR Standards

2024 Crew performance

TURNOUT TIME/FIRST UNIT DEPARTS

<90 seconds
90% of the time for
priority calls

90th Percentile*:
1 min. 42 seconds

90th PERCENTILE* RESPONSE TIMES

Camano Fire has
adopted a first
arriving unit
response time
standard of 9
minutes and 30
seconds
90% of the time for
all priority calls.

Department-wide

12:03

By response zone

Station 2
11:08

Station 3
10:25

Station 4
11:58

Station 5
16:13

911 call

someone calls 911



dispatch

911 dispatch
center processes
call and
dispatches
appropriate units



turnout

Time from unit
dispatch to time
when crew is
geared up, in
vehicle & leaving
for the call



travel

Time from unit
leaving to when
it physically
arrives at the
call



*90th Percentile means that 90% of the time we responded at the time listed or more quickly.

** Longer response times are often due to overlapping calls or ability to rapidly move apparatus from their current location to the physical location of the emergency.

RESPONSE ANALYSIS

Predictable consequences

Response standards within the fire service are based on certain critical time factors, e.g. time to flash-over in a burning room, decrease in survival rates over time following a cardiac arrest without defibrillation, and a decrease in survival rates over time following severe traumatic injuries prior to arrival at a trauma facility. We understand the critical importance of these measures and acknowledge the significance of meeting these standards to ensure the safety and well-being of our community members.

All departments face individual challenges in meeting these critical time points and national standards are especially difficult to meet for

rural departments like CIFR. In addition, Camano Island faces unique challenges, such as geographically dispersed populations, fewer firefighters and paramedics per capita, and a single access point for mutual aid response. We rely on mutual aid resources from neighboring departments and have agreements in place to supplement our fire and medical personnel when needed. Our isolated geography limits our ability to receive mutual aid which can exacerbate staffing and response challenges.

Our commitment to community safety remains a top priority, and working collaboratively with neighboring agencies strengthens our capacity to efficiently meet the needs of our residents.

Plan of Action

Voter approval of a fire levy lid lift in 2023 enabled the District to hire 10 firefighters in 2024, two of whom were paramedics, to fill vacant positions and increase total staffing. Two additional department firefighters completed paramedic school and resumed work on the island. The District continues to invest in its firefighters, sending at least two firefighters each year to paramedic school, to improve daily ALS response.

The District contracted with an architect and completed the preapplication process with Island County as part of its work to renovate the Mabana Fire Station to accommodate 24-hour staffing. It also staffed an additional daytime ambulance at Mabana to help improve response times by having more staff on shift strategically positioned around the island.

Administratively, the District restructured its three shifts by adding new Battalion Chief positions to supervise daily operations and call response. BCs support administrative operations, such as supply logistics, staff training, and the part-time and volunteer firefighter program, and serve as an additional on-duty responder.

Action Items for 2025:

- Hire part-time firefighters to augment career staffing.
- Recruit lateral paramedics and train new paramedics to improve daily ALS resources.
- Permit and build temporary quarters at Mabana to accommodate 24-hour staffing.
- Finalize design, receive building permit, and begin preconstruction work at Mabana.

SERVICES

Fire suppression

Our strategy in responding to structure fires is simple – get there fast and extinguish the fire while it's small. When we arrive before flashover (when the temperature closest to the fire rises to a level where everything ignites), they find a fire that requires little water or extinguishment effort.

However, once flashover occurs, ordinary fire suppression techniques have little impact on life and property loss near the fire. After flashover, the smoke and heat generated reduce the chances of safe evacuation in the remainder of the building. This also presents a much greater danger to the firefighters. Unless the building is equipped with sprinklers, firefighters must take hose lines inside to extinguish the fire.

CIFR utilizes an aggressive attack strategy to push the heat, smoke and steam away from potential survivors;



if this is not possible, defensive operations are deployed to prevent the fire from spreading and contain it to the room of origin. The success of fire suppression operations depends on early intervention by response crews.

CIFR dispatches four engines, three tenders, one rescue truck, one medic truck and a chief officer to a working fire. However, quick response times are dependent on the location of the fire in relationship to the fire station and availability of firefighters.

Marine Rescue



When you live on an island, water rescue is very important. On Camano, we see more water rescues than cardiac arrests. Too often, the victim isn't wearing a life jacket, and time is everything. During crabbing and shrimp season, the number of boaters increases dramatically on the island. The department has two boats, including a 28 foot fireboat, to support marine rescue. Every firefighter with the department is trained as a fireboat operator, and career staff are trained as water rescue technicians.

SERVICES

Emergency Medical Services

All firefighters are cross-trained as EMTs or paramedics, with Medical Control taking place through the Island County Medical Direction.

Personnel maintain rigorous training and recertification processes following Washington State Department of Health guidelines and the adopted and approved continuing education plan.

Emergency Medical Services are provided through the use of engine companies and ambulance crews who are trained as paramedics or EMTs. Based on the need for services, these units will respond with either a fire engine, Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance, or Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance.

Depending on the on-duty personnel available, the on-duty fire engine may be staffed either as a basic or advanced life support unit. Once patient care has been established, an appropriate care level is determined, and either the basic life support personnel, EMTs, or advanced life support paramedics provide care until arriving at a local hospital for definitive care.

A minimum of ALS and one BLS ambulance, as well as one fire engine, are staffed 24 hours per day, 365 days per year and are strategically positioned on Camano Island to provide rapid response.



PARAMEDICS

The new recruits serving as paramedics on Camano Island have been through emergency boot camp in either Bellingham or Seattle.

Harborview Medical Center in Seattle is the region's busiest trauma center. There, each recruit responds to at least 3,000 emergencies. Those thousands of calls prepare them to serve with other veterans. There are many examples of crew members who served in high-volume areas such as Portland and Seattle. It's all been important training, since Camano Island logs more than a thousand EMS calls per year.

Training

Camano Island Fire and Rescue is committed to preparing fire and rescue personnel to deliver excellent service to the community's residents while adhering to training requirements as mandated by law. This is accomplished by proactively responding to changes, solving problems, collaborating on issues, assessing the needs of the community and personnel, and developing viable solutions.

The training division accomplishes this by incorporating the best instructional and training methods and continuously evaluating the personnel's capabilities. All Camano Fire personnel are certified in HazMat Awareness and Operations, and Firefighter 1 and Firefighter 2.

In 2024 the department had 8,041 total training hours. That means each firefighter invested an average of 132 hours on training throughout the year.



Rope Rescue



Rope rescue operations are a critical piece of the technical rescue response on Camano Island. Much of our shoreline is high bluff, and often it is a homeowner's pet that goes over a cliff. If we don't go get the dog, nine times out of 10 we'll have to go after the owner instead.

The department commits to training every career firefighter in rope rescue; many of our firefighters are at the technician level, requiring at least 40 hours of training, though most have 90 or more hours. In addition, the rope rescue equipment and methods are frequently used in other rescue operations, such as fire incidents and car accidents.

Community outreach & education

Camano Island Fire and Rescue paramedics offer monthly CPR classes for the public that include Adult, Child & Infant CPR training, Choking, and AED. We participate in public and community events throughout the year, from National Night Out and Touch-A-Truck in August, to our Halloween Party in October, to our Food Drive & Santa Run in December.

We also offer in-person and virtual safety and health information presentations to community groups as requested, and visit local elementary schools to talk about fire safety education. We even bring Sparky the Fire Dog!



NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

Elementary fire
safety & field day
school visits
Feb. - June

National Night
Out on Camano
August

Food Drive
& Santa Run
December



July
Kids Fest at
Camano Commons

October
Halloween party
& haunted house