



SNOHOMISH REGIONAL FIRE & RESCUE

Chief's Report

March 27, 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

RETIREMENTS

Battalion Chief Travis Welch is retiring Tuesday, April 1, 2025. BC Welch's flag ceremony is scheduled for Saturday, March 29 at 9:00 a.m. at Station 81. Thank you, Travis, for your 35 years of service!

Battalion Chief Matt Bernethy; is retiring Tuesday, April 1, 2025. BC Bernethy's flag ceremony was held Wednesday, March 12 at 9:00 a.m. at Station 81. We thank Matt for his 35 years of service!

PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to SRFR's newly promoted Assistant Fire Marshal Jason Bowen. After an extensive assessment center and chief's interview, Jason performed at a very high level. AFM Bowen's promotion will be effective April 1.

OPERATIONS

Significant Alarms

Mutal Aid Fire Response 3/5/2025

In the early morning hours of March 5, Snohomish Regional Fire & Rescue (SRFR) crews responded to assist Snohomish County Fire District 5 with a large garage fire on Sultan Basin Road. When they arrived, they found the detached garage fully engulfed in flames, with a van burning nearby.

The District 5 crew established a water supply and pulled a hose line to attack the flames from the front. Meanwhile, SRFR crews set up scene lighting to improve visibility and worked to



contain the fire from multiple sides. It took about an hour to bring the fire under control. Due to the heavy fire load inside, where race cars were being built, overhaul was extensive. Despite the challenges, District 5 and SRFR worked together efficiently and effectively to prevent the fire from spreading beyond the structure.



Residential Fire Response 3/8/2025

SRFR responded to a residential fire after a caller reported a "fire at a neighbor's house." As units were on the way, dispatch provided an update that the fire had started in an RV and was spreading to the home. A concerned neighbor alerted the resident, who was able to evacuate safely before firefighters arrived.

When firefighters reached the scene, they found the RV, parked at the front corner of the home, fully engulfed in flames with fire spreading into the attic. Firefighters, including those from King County, quickly worked to contain the fire, deploying hose lines to protect the home and establish a water supply. The house was checked for further fire extension. As flames spread, additional crews arrived to ventilate the attic and attack the fire from multiple angles. With teams working both inside and outside the home, firefighters were able to bring the fire under control. Utility crews secured power and gas, while a fire investigator began assessing the cause. The homeowner's insurance company arrived to assist with securing the property. Thanks to the coordinated efforts of SRFR and King County, the fire was contained, preventing further damage.



Mutual Aid Fire with Injuries 3/12/2025

A residential fire in Granite Falls left one person with serious burn injuries. SRFR firefighters and medics responded with Granite Falls Fire District 17 to assist with the incident. The patient received life-saving care and was airlifted to Harborview Medical Center.

Firefighters arrived to find the home fully involved and initiated a defensive fire attack. Meanwhile, medics provided critical care to the injured individual. Additional medical resources were quickly requested, and Airlift Northwest was dispatched to transport the patient for advanced treatment. Crews worked together to contain the fire while also ensuring a safe landing zone for Airlift at a nearby school. Thanks to the coordinated efforts of all responders, both fire suppression and emergency medical care were handled efficiently.

During the fire response, crews identified a downed power line near a motor home close to the fire. All personnel were advised of the hazard and maintained a safe distance until PUD arrived to secure it. Firefighters continued their efforts, containing the fire and conducting an extensive overhaul. The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Thanks to the quick actions of emergency crews, the burn victim received immediate, advanced medical care, including airway management, multiple IVs, burn treatment, and administration of the Cyanokit. The EMS Division's decision to equip Battalion Chief units with an additional Cyanokit proved critical, as two were needed for treatment. Despite suffering significant burns, the patient is expected to recover. Great job to all crews involved in both the firefighting and life-saving efforts!

Special Operations

Electric Vehicle Fire with EV Blanket Deployment 3/16/2025

On March 16, SRFR responded to assist Granite Falls Fire District 17 with an electric vehicle (EV) fire, which was initially reported by OnStar as an "EV Thermal Event." Each of SRFR's Battalion apparatus, along with Hazardous Materials 72, is equipped with an EV Fire Blanket, a specialized tool for controlling fires involving electric vehicles. Upon arrival, the EV Fire Blanket was deployed to contain the harmful products of combustion from the fire. Crews continued to apply water under the blanket, working to fully extinguish the flames. Once the fire was out, the vehicle was towed with the EV Fire Blanket still in place, and SRFR followed the tow truck to ensure that the vehicle did not reignite during transport. This quick and effective response helped ensure the safety of both the crew and the community.



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Training

Blue Card Training

The Training Division recently held a Blue Card Incident Management Training at Station 71 for 11 SRFR students. Special thanks to Scott Boswell for organizing and instructing, as well as to Chris McGraw, Chris Stablein, Jamal Beckham, and Sam Langheld for their contributions as instructors. This vital training is essential for company officers and aspiring company officers to effectively manage emergency incidents.

Health & Safety

Ultrasound Screening

United Diagnostic Services (UDS) will continue to conduct ultrasound screenings at the SRFR Administration Building through March 29. This screening is a new addition to our firefighter annual physicals and will help increase the early detection of cancer and cardiovascular disease.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Community Relations

Chamber of Commerce Membership Meetings

The March 5 Sky Valley Chamber Membership Luncheon was attended by Assistant Chief Messer, Senior Deputy Fire Marshal Bowen, and Deputy Fire Marshal Dahl. The topic for March was March Mingle Networking.

The March 11 Monroe Chamber Membership Luncheon was attended by Commissioner Elmore, Commissioner Waugh, Assistant Chief Messer, Deputy Chief McConnell, and Senior Deputy Fire Marshal Bowen. The topic for March was New Performance Standards for Commercial Buildings & Clean Buildings Legislation with Jeff Rasmussen, Program Manager & Community Outreach for Washington State Department of Commerce.

The March 12 Lake Stevens Chamber Membership Luncheon was attended by Commissioner Elmore, Senior Deputy Fire Marshal Bowen, Deputy Fire Marshal LeDuc, and Program Specialist Larson. The topic for March included presentations from several local Community Service Organizations.

Public Information

Social Media Snapshot: February 6, 2025 – March 18, 2025

- 71 Posts
- 313 New Followers/Accounts
- 700,190 Impressions/Engagement/Clicks
- 24,363 Total Followers

External Communications:

- Regional Snowstorm
- January 25 Service Calls



- Job Postings
- SR522 MVCM
- Scout Day Promos
- EMS Hype Video
- Special Announcement: Fire Commissioner
- Probie Promotions
- KCFD50 Tech Rescue Mutual Aid
- Climbing for a Cure
- Windstorm Messaging
- Water Rescue Mutual Aid with SCFD4
- HWY 2 MVCM HazMat
- Shop Ribbon Cutting
- SRFR in the Classrooms: Hands Only CPR
- February 25 Calls for Service
- MCO Training
- Dave Jonker Retirement
- SRFR Stair Climb
- Battalion Chief Bernethy Retirement
- Chief's Run with Probies
- SR92 EV Fire Mutual Aid (2k reactions, 507 comments, 477 shared)
- St. Patrick's Day Safety Message

Earned Media:

- KIRO 7: High-Speed Head-On Crash Closes SR522 in Snohomish County <https://komonews.com/news/local/high-speed-head-on-crash-state-route-522-snohomish-county-regional-fire-and-rescue-east-of-fales-road-occupants-hospital>
- Everett Herald: Three Seriously Injured After Head-On Collision on SR522. <https://www.heraldnet.com/news/high-speed-head-on-collision-closes-all-lanes-of-highway-522-near-fales-road/>
- Lynnwood Times: Three in Hospital Following Head-On Crash on SR522 <https://lynnwoodtimes.com/2025/02/11/crash-sr-522/>
- KOMO: Hazmat Team Responds to Chemical Spill from 3-Vehicle Crash on US 2 Near Monroe <https://komonews.com/news/local/chemical-spill-from-3-vehicle-crash-shuts-down-hwy-2-near-monroe-hazmat-team-en-route-traffic-closure-commute-car-driver-washington-seattle-danger-warning-delay>
- Everett Herald: US 2 Reopens Near Monroe After Closure for Three-Vehicle Crash <https://www.heraldnet.com/news/us-2-closed-near-monroe-after-three-vehicle-crash/>
- KIRO: Cement Truck Driver Pinned Under Truck in Skykomish <https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/cement-truck-driver-pinned-under-truck-skykomish/AF44FPN24ZGDPPEFEZ7567PYZQ/>



- KIRO: EV Fire Blanket Used to Fight Car Fire on SR92 in Granite Falls. <https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/ev-fire-blanket-used-fight-car-fire-sr-92-granite-falls/EBRSJE4DH5HXZL3O2EKTA3BK7E/>

Capital Facilities Update

Stations 32 and 81

SRFR and OAC are continuing discussions with BN Builders and Miller Hull regarding ongoing program planning and general cost estimates, working toward a mutually agreed upon Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP). The team will also meet with the city of Lake Stevens to review further details on the shared stormwater vault.

Station 72

The sewer and water plan is currently under review by Alderwood Water & Wastewater District. The review timeline is estimated at approximately 10 weeks from the receipt of the application on February 19. After the review is completed, SRFR will be assigned a Development Technician to proceed.

Fleet

SRFR staff recently met with Spartan and True North for a pre-construction discussion on the newly purchased ladder truck. Additionally, the ladder truck purchased in 2023 will go into production in May with a planned September completion.

ADMINISTRATION

Chief O'Brien's Retirement

It is with bittersweet emotions that I let the Board know that I will be retiring this July 15, 2025. As I reflect on my ten rewarding years with SRFR, I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity to work alongside such dedicated and talented individuals. The entire SRFR team has made this journey truly remarkable. Your commitment to excellence and our shared mission has been inspiring.

Serving as a firefighter for 34 years has been an honor and a privilege, especially being part of the O'Brien family legacy of four generations of career firefighters. I am deeply proud of the work we have accomplished together and the impact we have made in our community.

Snohomish Regional Fire & Rescue is thriving and has a bright future ahead. I am confident that the organization will continue to excel and reach new heights.

Thank you all for your partnership!

Take care and stay safe,

Kevin O'Brien, Fire Chief