

# ASHLAND FIRE & RESCUE



2014  
**Annual Report**



**Cover Photograph:** New Pumper Operating at Idaho St. Fire 8-17-14

# **Ashland Fire & Rescue**

## **Mission Statement**

Ashland Fire & Rescue is dedicated to protecting lives, property, and the environment. By delivering fire suppression, emergency medical, disaster management, fire prevention and public education services by professionally trained, dedicated personnel, we strive to achieve the highest quality of public service to our customers.

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## **Values and Expectations**

### **PROFESSIONALISM**

Dependability - *Reliability to duty and responsibility to others*  
Excellence - *Continually improving job skills and knowledge base*  
Presentation - *Displaying a high level of fitness and positive attitude*

### **COMPASSION**

Empathy - *Understands and values how others feel*  
Service to Others - *Giving of one's time and energy to meet the needs of others*

### **INTEGRITY**

Honesty - *Being truthful and straightforward*  
Accountable - *Responsible for one's own actions*  
Ethical - *Doing the right thing even when no one else is watching*

### **TEAMWORK**

Respect - *Shows high regard for others*  
Cooperation - *Contributes to the team*  
Loyalty - *Shows devotion to the improvement of the department*

### **COMMUNITY**

Involvement - *Participates in department and community events*  
Family - *Supports coworkers, their families, and the community*





# Ashland Fire & Rescue

## 2014 Annual Report

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## CHIEF'S REPORT

I am pleased to present our annual report for 2014. This report is an overview of the highlights and accomplishments of Ashland Fire & Rescue. AF&R continues to strive for excellent customer service while managing an ever-increasing response volume. Other influences such as an extremely volatile wildland fire season, a communicable disease event with the EBOLA virus, and an over 300% increase in inter-hospital transfers further challenged the organization.

The City requested a review of its Public Protection Classification (PPC) by the Insurance Services Office (ISO). A significant change with the ISO grading schedule along with significant accomplishments by the City's Firewise Communities effort and the citizen emergency preparedness effort warranted this review. This updated report is ex-

### SOME 2014 FIRE FACTS

**3643....INCIDENTS RESPONDED TO IN 2014**

**814.....NUMBER OF OVERLAPPING RESPONSES**

**2342....EMS RESPONSES IN 2014**

**390.....FIRE RESPONSES IN 2014**

**5.4.....AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME IN MINUTES WITHIN ASHLAND**

**1700....NUMBER OF PATIENTS TRANSPORTED**

**650.....NUMBER OF FIRE PREVENTION BUILDING INSPECTIONS**

**2.3%....PERCENTAGE OF INCREASE IN RESPONSES IN LAST 12 MONTHS**

**3.....AVERAGE NUMBER OF MEMBERS 'TURNING OUT' FOR EACH CALL**

pected in the second quarter of 2015 and we hope to see an improvement in our current PPC score of four. This score influences the fire insurance rates for many residential and commercial buildings.

The department took delivery of two new fire pumper units from Pierce Manufacturing in Appleton, Wisconsin. These two new vehicles replaced two older units that have exceeded their service life. The vehicles were placed in front-line service in the third quarter of the year. This unit's expected service life is 20 years.

The department continued its citizen emergency preparedness effort with the second annual Ashland is Ready (AIR) workshop. The workshop hosted 400 attendees and concentrated on the region's seismic risk .

The expansion of the Wildfire Hazard Zone moved into the next phase and working with the Planning Department, several public outreach and review events were held.

Thank you for your interest in Ashland Fire & Rescue, please take a moment and look over our annual report. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

*John Karns, Fire Chief*

## CHIEF'S REPORT (continued)

New Engines



City Administrator Dave Kanner and Project Lead Lance Menold



Under Construction at Pierce Manufacturing in Appleton, Wisconsin



Completed Vehicles Ready to Leave Wisconsin for Oregon

## DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

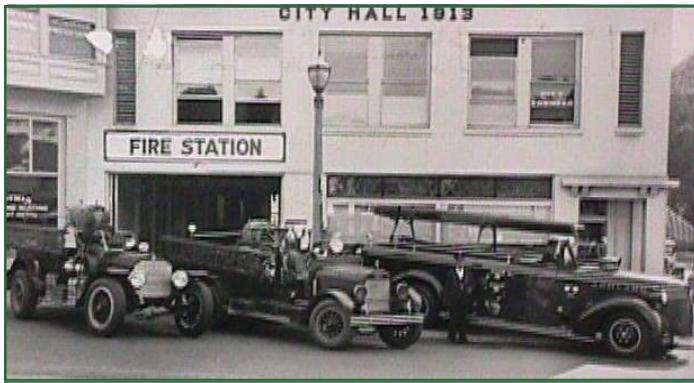
### GENERAL

Ashland Fire & Rescue provides fire suppression, fire prevention, emergency medical, rescue, and watershed management services to the 20,713 citizens and 6.52 square miles of Ashland. Ashland Fire & Rescue also provides advanced life support medical transportation for Jackson County Ambulance Service Area #3 making up 650 square miles from the California border to Phoenix. Ashland Fire & Rescue also provides the following services:

Firewise Communities	Child Safety Seat Installation
Fire Adapted Communities	Public Safety Education
City Emergency Management	Ashland Response Team
Emergency Preparedness	Citizen Alert and 1700 AM Radio
CERT and CPR	Fire Alarm and Sprinkler Plan Reviews
Fire Inspections	Smoke and Wildfire Hotline

### HISTORY

The two new Pierce fire engines are a far-cry from the first vehicles that the fire department employed. The department's first engines were pulled by hand. In 1911 the two hand-pulled hose carts were replaced with a hose wagon pulled by horses. The hose wagon was phased out in 1913 with the purchase of a gas-powered American LaFrance chemical engine. The term "engine" originated from these "chemical engines" that fire departments used over 100 years ago. Sulfuric acid was combined with soda to produce carbon dioxide gas that expanded to create pressure that pushed water out of the fire hoses. Today's fire engines are diesel powered apparatus producing over 500 horsepower and able to pump more than 1500 gallons per minute and carry 750 gallons of water.



Fleet of Fire Engines circa 1920's

### STAFFING

Ashland Fire & Rescue has 27 line personnel, all paramedics, and a total staffing level of 33.8 FTE's. The daily staffing level for line personnel is a minimum of eight and maximum of nine. Line personnel work a schedule of 48 hours on-duty then 96 hours off-duty yielding a 56 hour work week. Additional personnel may be called in during extreme fire weather, large emergencies, and for special events.

The department has a Fire Chief who also functions as the Operations Chief and Emergency Manager. There are three Division Chiefs. One Division Chief oversees

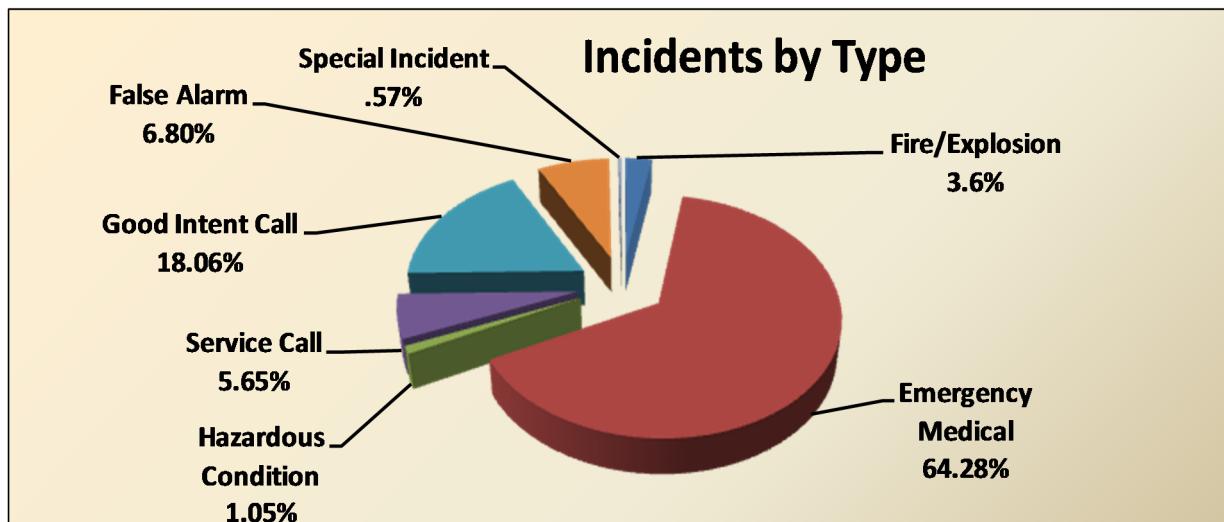
## DEPARTMENT INFORMATION (continued)

emergency medical services, one oversees fire and life safety matters, and one oversees all watershed and forest lands/wildfire protection issues. Line personnel are broken down into three platoons, A, B, and C shifts. Each platoon has a commander known as a Battalion Chief who oversees all activities of that shift. Each shift also has two Captains, one assigned at each station. Each shift has two Engineers who are trained to operate the fire pumper, one assigned to each station. The remainder of each shift is made up of Firefighter/Paramedics who are assigned either to the ambulance or pumper depending on the nature of the response. Shift members may also qualify to fill a position above their current rank if a vacancy exists. All shift personnel are certified to perform fire safety inspections in low hazard occupancies such as retail shops and apartment buildings. Shift personnel also conduct child safety seat inspections and some are CERT and CPR instructors.

### GOVERNANCE AND BUDGET

Ashland Fire & Rescue operates under Oregon Revised Statutes 476 and Article XIII of the City Charter. Ashland Fire & Rescue enforces numerous codes relating to building construction, fire and life safety, wildfire hazard zones, and wildfire fuels management and weed abatement.

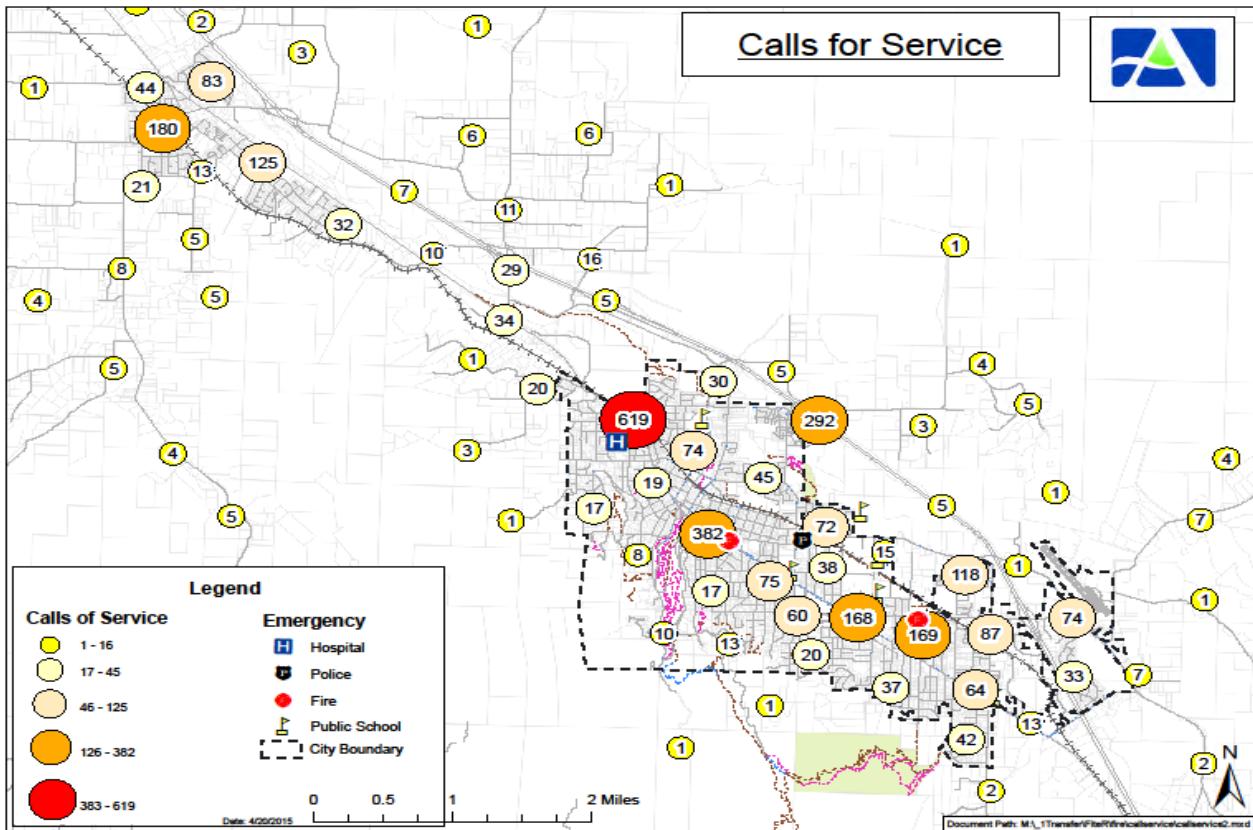
The biennium 2013/2015 budget for Ashland Fire & Rescue was \$13,053,484. Ashland Fire & Rescue also administered \$887,265 from the water fund that was used to manage city owned forest lands, and for the Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project in our watershed. Ashland Fire & Rescue charges for services such as ambulance response and transportation of patients, plan reviews, fire safety inspections, and certain hazardous materials spills, motor vehicle accidents, and remote area rescues.



### TYPES OF RESPONSES FOR 2014

This chart shows the general types of incidents to which the department responds. During many of these responses we are either receiving mutual aid by neighboring fire departments or providing it.

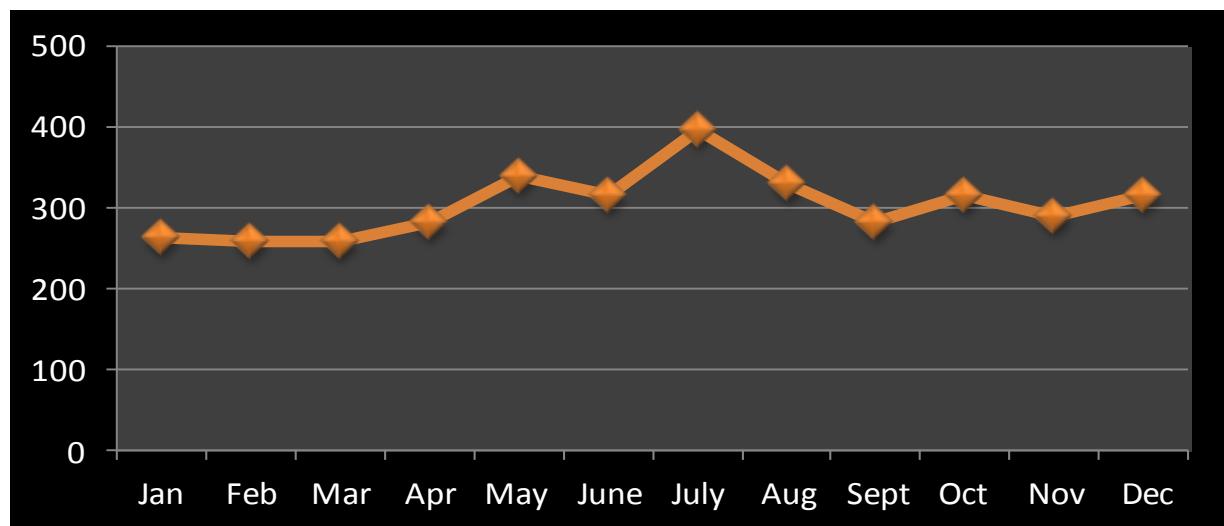
## DEPARTMENT INFORMATION (continued)



**Total Number of Incidents** 3,643

**Total Number of Responding Personnel** 10,235

**Average Turnout (number of personnel)** 3



**Response Volume by Month**

## DEPARTMENT INFORMATION (continued)

### FIRE STATION 1 455 Siskiyou Boulevard



2011 CHEVROLET  
COMMAND VEHICLE



2014 PIERCE TYPE 1 PUMPER



2003 PIERCE WILDLAND  
INTERFACE ENGINE



2011 LIFELINE  
AMBULANCE



2002 PIERCE TYPE 1 PUMPER



2007 TYPE 6 BRUSH  
ENGINE



2006 LIFELINE  
AMBULANCE



1999 LIFELINE  
AMBULANCE

## DEPARTMENT INFORMATION (continued)

### FIRE STATION 2 1860 Ashland Street



2014 PIERCE TYPE 1  
PUMPER



2008 LIFELINE  
AMBULANCE



2003 LIFELINE  
AMBULANCE



2003 FORD TYPE 6  
BRUSH ENGINE



TECHNICAL RESCUE  
TRAILER



## FIRE and EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

Ashland Fire & Rescue responds to a wide variety of call types within the City of Ashland and our Ambulance Service Area (ASA #3). The department responds to and receives aid from neighboring jurisdictions under mutual and automatic aid agreements. The department also participates with other state resources through Oregon's Emergency Conflagration Act managed by the Oregon State Police/ State Fire Marshal. Jackson County Fire District 5 and Ashland Fire & Rescue also have a cooperative agreement to rotate "Duty Officer" assignments so that both departments can get a second Chief Officer responding if the incident is significant. Several officers in the department also participate in the Rogue Valley Fire Chief's Incident Management Team. All line personnel at Ashland Fire & Rescue are EMT-Paramedics. The Fire Chief is also the Fire Defense Board Chief for Jackson County and represents the county at the state level for large events.

Ashland is divided into two fire response districts. Fire Station 1, 455 Siskiyou Blvd., serves District 1 and Fire Station 2, 1860 Ashland St., serves District 2. District 1 has approximately 74% of the responses and District 2 approximately 26%. Most of the responses to the Green Springs area and incidents on I-5 are handled by Station 2. The



**Vehicle Accident with Electrical Wires Down**

administration staff are assigned to Fire Station 1.

As with all fire departments in Jackson County, Ashland Fire & Rescue resources are dispatched by Emergency Communications of Southern Oregon (ECSO), a dispatch and PSAP (public safety answering point) center located near the Medford airport. Both Ashland Police Department and Ashland

Fire & Rescue pay a fee to ECSO based on population of area served and number of responses. For Ashland Fire & Rescue the average dispatch "cost" per call is just over \$47.

Ashland Fire & Rescue maintains hazardous materials technician certifications for three line members. Hazardous materials releases are rare for the Rogue Valley but the I-5 corridor brings a strong potential for a significant hazardous



**Bull Gap Lightning Strike Fire**

## FIRE and EMERGENCY OPERATIONS (continued)



**Rapid Intervention Training**

materials event. The department also maintains the ability for basic radiation detection through an inventory of Geiger-Muller meters and personal dosimeters.

Ashland Fire & Rescue maintains a number of members trained in technical rope rescue and confined space rescue, a highly technical discipline. The department has a trailer with its technical rescue equipment located at Fire Station 2 that can be towed to an emergency scene.

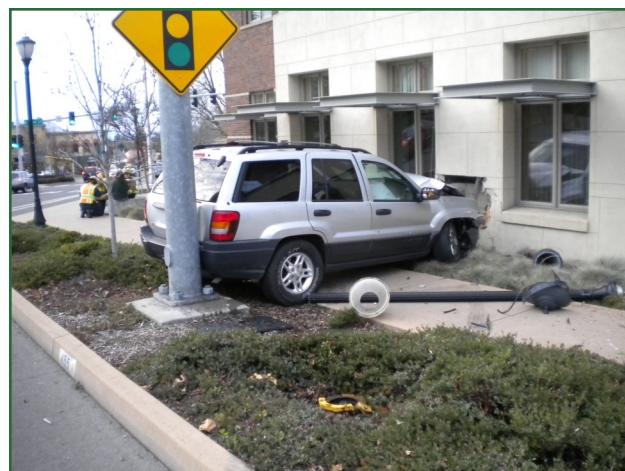
It seems it was Jackson County's turn for an active wildfire season in 2014. There were a number of large events that challenged local resources and required activation of not only the local mutual aid pacts, but also several state conflagration declarations. The largest wildfire event was the Beaver Complex that was comprised of the Salt Creek Fire (20 miles northwest of Medford) and the Oregon Gulch Fire

(near Greensprings and burned into California) totaling 35,302 acres burned and utilized 460 personnel.

Ashland Fire & Rescue responded to 84 fire incidents in 2014, a decrease of two from 2013 though the total call volume increased by 95 from 2013.

With new vehicles having more robust construction for safety reasons and using various micro-alloy metals, the department is pursuing funding for new hydraulic rescue equipment (jaws of life) to replace its current 20+ year old extrication equipment. The current rescue equipment is not able to breach and manipulate many of the new cars being built today.

Members of the department hold annual fire and life safety training for the resident assistants of SOU. The resident assistants are taught evacuation procedures, fire safety and basic fire suppression skills.



**Fire Marshal Hickman was surprised while working late one evening when an errant driver tried to make her office a drive-through.**

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Ashland Fire & Rescue has been providing high quality ambulance services to the residents of south Jackson County as the primary ambulance service provider since 1996. We consistently meet or exceed the standards and requirements of our Ambulance Service Area (ASA) agreement. Paramedics responded to over 2342 medical calls and transported over 1700 patients to the area's three hospitals. Ashland Fire &



### SOU Resident Assistant Medical Training

Rescue's average response time within the city of Ashland was approximately 5.2 minutes.

Ashland Fire & Rescue's Fire-Med subscription program offers low cost ground ambulance subscription services with annual sign ups in October of each year. In addition to AF&R's regular ground Fire-Med membership, Ashland Fire & Rescue has a negotiated partnership

agreement with Mercy Flights Air Ambulance to provide Air service for our Fire-Med Plus membership. This past year the Fire-Med program had 1,476 memberships covering 2,809 members and transported over 370 Fire-Med members.

This past year our department continued to face technical changes and challenges for emergency medical services. There were still a number of system wide shortages of necessary medications. Revenues were negatively impacted again by changes in Medicare compensation and the reduction in overall reimbursement levels. EBOLA was a major impact this year with additional purchases of equipment and additional training, constant changes to the CDC guidelines. Even with these challenges Ashland Fire & Rescue personnel worked hard and were fully prepared, setting the example for EMS with the correct PPE and completed training of all crews to provide safety to the crews and public and safe and effective care for patients.

Call volume for 2014 was up slightly compared to the previous year. This last May, July and December saw spikes in call volume with several days with as many as 28 responses in one 24 hour period, which challenged our staff.

Ashland Fire & Rescue personnel logged a total of 853 classes and over 890 hours of EMS training this year with each person receiving an average of over 31 hours of individual EMS training in addition to fire training, responding to emergency calls and completing their other assigned departmental duties.

All Ashland Fire & Rescue personnel completed the necessary state require-

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (continued)

ments of continuing education, training and skills requirements to renew their State of Oregon Emergency Medical Technician License at their current level coming due at the end of March.

Ashland Fire & Rescue strives to improve its operations by increased efficiency and effectiveness through the use of technology. This past year Ashland Fire & Rescue has been working on several projects to increase efficiency and provide high quality service.

This year Ashland Fire & Rescue switched records management systems to a more current web-based system. This change replaces the server-based system that was over twelve years old. This new system incorporates new and more efficient technology software to manage many aspects of department operations. The new system will make EMS reporting easier for the paramedics and streamline reporting to allow reports to be completed with a tablet from the ambulance making crews more available for responses.

Ashland Fire & Rescue continues to pursue grant opportunity from many sources. Through the State EMS for Children organization we were able to deliver several required training events in Advanced Life Support in-house. Those courses not only completes the requirement for paramedic re-licensure but helped fund other needed training.

Ashland Fire & Rescue supports the community through its ride- along and job shadowing program for college and high school students, mentorships for Emergency Medical Technician students and the Paramedic intern training program. This year Ashland Fire & Rescue Paramedics logged over 1900 hrs of teaching and mentoring of students,

EMTs and Paramedics to develop care providers who will continue to provide ongoing quality patient care to our community in the future.

Ashland Fire & Rescue has facilitated the placement of public access AEDs (heart Defibrillators) by promoting their benefits during our many public presentations, internally through the city safety committee, the City Employee Emergency Response Teams (EERT) and to businesses, and civic groups. Ashland Fire & Rescue assists Jackson County by annually updating its records of AED placements that we report to County Health. This is done during business inspections and also helps find new unreported placements and verify biannual inspections. This is to insure that each



### Vehicle Rollover

AED is in working order and ready for use during a cardiac emergency.

Ashland Fire & Rescue personnel also help with public safety by providing numerous child safety seat inspections and installations for citizens. Ashland Fire & Rescue provides public CPR classes on a monthly basis by professionally trained instructors and is involved in the county-wide school CPR Initiative that holds classes in each of the cities 7<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms.

## FIRE and LIFE SAFETY

The Fire & Life Safety Division is primarily focused on activities that save lives and property by preventing fires. Prevented fires are difficult to measure; however, statistics do show that fire prevention efforts make a difference in the safety of a community. Assignments



**Kitchen Fire Stopped by Residential Sprinkler System**

of the Fire & Life Safety Division include plans review, fire code enforcement, weed abatement, fire investigation, public information, public education, CERT and public CPR training. The Fire & Life Safety Division was staffed with two full time personnel, the Division Chief/Fire Marshal and the CERT Coordinator, one temporary Weed Abatement Coordinator, eight hours per week administrative support person, and three firefighters conducting target hazard fire inspections.

Last year we reported on the additional overtime that would be used to provide inspections of facilities with greater hazards. We have found many of those inspections to be more challenging than anticipated due to the length of time

without routine inspections. We have been working with one facility to bring them into compliance with all of the hazardous materials that they store and use. In two facilities designed to be used as commercial storage, we found an abandoned grow operation in which the electrical system had been modified and left in a hazardous condition. In another of the commercial storage facilities, we found the space was partially converted to an apartment, complete with a Jacuzzi tub, and the rest was used for glass blowing. The glass blowing operation created a serious threat to the local businesses, occupants and firefighters. All of these situations were in violation of both fire and building codes.

While these last two examples are extreme and few in occurrence, we continue to find similar situations in which the public and firefighters are threatened by their existence. These inspections also take much more time than a typical inspection both for processes to follow and code research. For these two inspections, the landlord was contacted to assist in entry, and administrative warrants were obtained in the event that the landlord or occupant decided that they did not want us to enter.

The division continues to work closely with the building department and city Code Compliance Officer to find safe solutions to situations like those described in the previous paragraph. The relationship between the two divisions is essential to the safety of our city.

The department provided inspections to 422 businesses resulting in a total of almost 600 inspections. In addition, 63 occupancies were found vacant and not inspected, and more than 50 additional

## FIRE and LIFE SAFETY (continued)

inspections were completed in new construction, mostly for fire protection systems. Ninety-one inspections were completed in target hazard and more complex occupancies. Two citations were issued for illegal occupancy involving the conversion of commercial facilities to residential. The ultimate inspection goal is to provide annual inspections in most of our facilities, however that will require additional staffing. Annual inspections will help to reduce the number of serious situations like those listed above.

The department continues to conduct inspections on Halloween night and has worked closely with Ashland Police Department and OLCC in helping owners to find solutions to their challenges. Last year at the time of publication of this report, there were two citations for blocked exits awaiting trial. The fire department prevailed with the court finding both defendants guilty of the 2013 violations. This year the department issued two overcrowding citations on Halloween and one citation for a blocked exit. The charged parties have plead not guilty to all of the citations. One trial was just completed which included an overcrowding and blocked exit citation. Again, the court found the defendant guilty on both counts and assessed fines of \$500 for each count. One trial has been continued for later in the year.

There were 343 plans reviewed including site, landscape in the wildfire hazard zone, building, fire alarm, fire sprinklers, kitchen hood suppression systems, and planning applications. Of these reviews, 17 fire sprinkler plans were reviewed to be installed in five single family homes, five commercial structures and the balance being remodels. All of these fire sprinkler plans were required by codes

specifically or as an alternative to fire apparatus access or firefighting water supply. Fourteen flow tests were conducted with the Water Department to determine the available water to design the fire sprinkler systems.

Summer weed abatement came on fast and furious. This was the first year that all properties in the city were inspected. This can be attributed to both efficiencies gained in processes and greater compliance. One hundred and seventeen properties were found to be in violation, and three citations were issued. All of the citations were issued to banks with foreclosed and vacant properties. A total of 45 complaints were received for properties in violation of the weed abatement requirements. Twenty-one of those properties resulted in action being taken, and 18 complaints were unfounded.

Firefighters, CERT and FireWise Coordinators provided safety education to 45 K-5 classes for a total of 1,200 students. Additional fire safety classes were provided for the Ashland High School foods classes and the SOU Residential Life Staff for an additional 135 young adults.



**Fire Safety Education at  
Bellview School**

## FOREST DIVISION

Ashland Fire & Rescue's Forest Division guides wildfire mitigation, prevention and forest stewardship to help protect homes, property, and the City's municipal water supply. Forest Division staff partner with citizens, state and federal agencies, and non-profit groups for healthier and safer forests and neighborhoods under the Firewise Communities, Ashland Forest Resiliency and the new Fire Adapted Communities program. The Firewise Coordinator position was reclassified as the Fire Adapted Communities Coordinator to reflect this new priority.

### *Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project (AFR)*

2014 was a transitional year for the AFR project. Previous funding had been expended and the AFR partners secured new sources of project dollars and also lobbied with Mayor John Stromberg in Washington D.C. for program funding. Despite the transition, work still continued with an influx of money from several U.S. Forest Service sources and a generous match allocation by the National Forest Foundation. The partners proposed the Ashland Forest All-lands Restoration project that includes AFR amid 4000 acres of strategic fuels reduction on private land. This project was approved for \$2.2 million for 2015. During 2014, the following work was completed in AFR:

- 684 acres of fuels treatments
- 716 acres of controlled pile burning
- 1400 acres of work prepared for implementation in 2014 and 2015.

As in previous years, AFR maintained high visibility in the community through field tours, education, tabling at events and through the [AFR webpage](#) and [Facebook](#). Two notable community con-

tributions came from the Ashland Chamber of Commerce and the newly formed Ashland Watershed art group. The Chamber produced the *Ashland Map*, a beautiful 48-panel fold out map that features the AFR project and Ashland Watershed. The watershed art group is a loosely knit volunteer effort that has already captured local foundation funding to implement the beginnings of an art walk in the watershed.

### *City Forestlands*

The Forest Lands Commission continued to update the 1994 Ashland Forest Plan, a document that guides City forest policy. Each volunteer commissioner is contributing a piece of the renewed plan along with staff and public input. In the forest, staff and the City's contracting forester, Small Woodland Services, Inc., worked to implement ongoing prescribed underburning on City lands. Though additional units were planned and approved for burning, the drought conditions caused all burning in the region to be called off. In lieu of burning, Small Woodlands workers hit the ground with chainsaws to thin brush that threatens to increase fire danger next to homes and at the base of the City's municipal watershed. Approximately 60 acres of brush was thinned and controlled underburn plans were cached away for next spring.

### *Firewise Communities*

Ashland's Firewise Communities program continued to achieve success through a variety of wildfire safety and education activities in 2014. Firewise Communities recognizes neighborhoods that work together to craft wildfire preparedness solutions. Staff delivered over 200 individual wildfire safety home assessments, gave over \$47,000 in grant reimbursements for removing flammable vegetation, and created and distributed

## FOREST DIVISION (continued)

educational materials regarding wildfire prevention. As a result, Ashland added six new Firewise Communities to the 12 existing communities. Two grants helped Firewise efforts including a \$65,000 Jackson County Title III grant that funded existing or emerging Firewise Communities to renew their status or become Firewise. A \$75,000 grant from the Oregon Department of Forestry also paid up to \$500 for reimbursements to any property owners who removed flammable vegetation.

The Firewise city-wide efforts included events centered on a Firewise Week in May. The events included information and materials at the Ashland Public Library along with story times on wildfire preparedness with special appearances by Smokey Bear. *Firewise in the 4<sup>th</sup> Grade* educational program and poster contest continued in four local elementary schools. The successful Firewise Clean-Up Day event with Recology Ashland Sanitary Service allowed City residents to dispose of yard debris for free.

### *Fire Adapted Communities*

Ashland Fire & Rescue has adopted the national Fire Adapted Communities (FAC) program, which is part of the larger National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy. The FAC program will guide all of Ashland's wildfire programs set out in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, or CWPP. To that end, the Firewise Commission was repurposed and renamed the Wildfire Mitigation Commission (WMC) to guide an update of the 2004 CWPP that in turn charts a path for the Fire Adapted Communities program of work, which encompasses fuels reduction, codes and ordinances, Firewise Communities, Ready, Set, Go! (evacuation) and prevention

and education.

### *Ready, Set, Go!*

This is a new program that educates citizens on emergency evacuation due to any disaster. Magnets were created that show evacuation levels, as well as how to prepare. The program is being coordinated by a multi-agency group from both Jackson and Josephine Counties and will be rolled out for the 2015 summer fire season.

### *Wildfire Hazard Zone Expansion*

Forest Division staff and the Fire Marshal worked with the Planning Department to propose expansion of the Wildfire Hazard Zone to include the entire City of Ashland. In addition to the expansion, the code is being simplified and enhanced to address critical issues during construction projects. The proposal will be heard by the City Council in 2015.

### *Watershed Patrol*

Watershed Forest Patrol continued under a cooperative agreement between the City, U.S. Forest Service and the Jackson County Sheriff's department.

### *Wildland Fire Season Training*

Forestry Division Chief Chris Chambers taught the annual wildland urban interface class for firefighters from Ashland and in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service. Firefighters learned and practiced skills crucial to home protection. Home assessment, or triage, and tactical firefighting skills are stressed within a framework of firefighter and public safety. Strawberry Lane Meadows, a Firewise Community, hosted the 2014 training, allowing firefighters to learn the details of the local neighborhood.

## CERT and CPR

Ashland CERT volunteers actively engaged in many training opportunities throughout 2014 to better their preparedness response capabilities for a real-life disaster. With two training courses offered, resulting in an increase in volunteers by twenty-five participants joining Ashland CERT, the CERT "train-and-release" program netted thirty seven more community citizens trained in the Rogue Valley. Additionally, Ashland Fire & Rescue supported a CERT training for Josephine County at the Illinois Valley Fire Department in Cave Junction in co-operation with the Josephine County Emergency Management where another thirteen participants trained to total fifty more community members in Southern Oregon better prepared to handle and more resilient when disaster strikes.

CERT trainees understand how to effectively help their families, neighbors, and entire community following an incident where response personnel are overwhelmed. They receive knowledge and practical skills that allow them to effectively help others without harming themselves or further injuring others.

CERT volunteers receive training in all-hazards areas and this year we con-

ducted specialized training sessions including geographic information systems, Ready-Set-Go evacuation procedures, the Emergency Operations Center



(EOC) functions, firefighter rehab mission, advanced disaster psychology, safe drinking water, and more. Volunteers cross trained with other CERT programs including Central Point and Jacksonville and agencies including Medford Fire, Jackson County Sheriff's Office and Emergency Management, National Weather Service, Medford Emergency Management, Rogue Valley Transportation Department, and the US Army Corps of Engineers to name a few.

CERT volunteers were instrumental in assisting in the City's EOC drill proving to be knowledgeable in the systemic approach to obtaining, tracking, displaying, and understanding information during an incident. Volunteer training and support totaled more than 1,800 hours in 2014. Ashland CERT currently has 228 active volunteers who have received basic training and have a willingness to respond to disasters.

The Employee Emergency Response Team (EERT) was introduced early in 2014. A well prepared workforce is an essential component of the City of Ashland's ability to manage an emergency.



## CERT and CPR (continued)

The reality of an increased potential for man-made or natural disasters had the administration considering what steps could be implemented to develop a cohesive framework that would encompass the desired results of creating a culture of preparedness among the workforce. Thus Ashland Fire & Rescue began working diligently to develop a readiness plan for our most valued resources—our employees and their families. EERT training allows our employees to be more empowered in terms of preparedness. Seventeen City employees from ten departments took part in the hybrid training aimed at business continuity and employee readiness and accountability. Each employee obtained a small emergency supplies kit. This sentiment helps to ensure that some thought has been made and that some needed items are in place to assist with our employees evacuating themselves, co-workers, and the general public if necessary.

We were the recipients of the first “Achievement in Risk Management” award from the Oregon Public Risk Management Association for the continued efforts and dynamic approach to risk reduction and readiness.

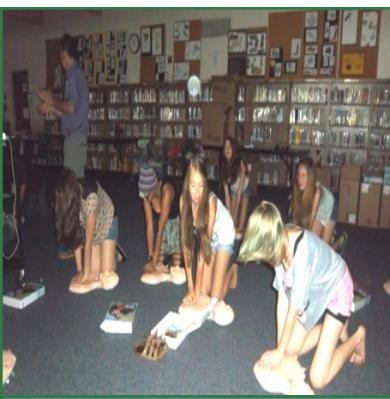
The Emergency Prepared Business (EPB) program was also introduced in early 2014 highlighting a detailed checklist of steps businesses can achieve to become resilient and continue operations following a disaster or

other large-scale emergency impacting them. The program allows attendees to acquire the knowledge, confidence, and skills to effectively mitigate a disaster. Key elements include hazard prevention education, leadership during emergencies and an understanding and ability to implement procedures and protocols. This information is critical to a business's response to and recovery from a disaster. The workshops were open to business owners and employees. Standing Stone Brewing Company was the first business to certify after taking many steps in making many improvements to their business model.

The CPR program continues to strive to teach all community members the life-saving techniques of cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Ashland Fire & Rescue once

again participated with the Southern Oregon CPR Initiative in delivering CPR instruction to all seventh-grade students in Ashland. The public education program grew in offering instruction to not only public school students, but the alternative school facilities as well. As CPR awareness increases requests from other educators in grades K-5 has increased as well.

We continue to set goals fostering informed empowered individuals through our interconnected preparedness programs to ensure community resiliency in catastrophic events.



**ANYTIME CPR  
TRAINING AT  
ASHLAND MIDDLE**



## TRAINING

2014 was a year of “firsts” in the diverse subject matter firefighters would have to become proficient at. With the prospect of a nationwide EBOLA outbreak, Ashland Fire and Rescue developed what would become a county-wide model policy for how paramedics deal with pandemic emergencies. The department had to change both its standard response to infections emergencies and become proficient with new safety equipment needed to keep the community and first responders safe.

2014 saw Ashland Fire & Rescue expand its rope rescue training delivered to all shift personnel. With a need for in-



**Some Responses Require Multiple Disciplines Such as Vehicle Extrication and Low-Angle Rope Rescue**



**“Flood Fight” Training**

creased safety in response to medical emergencies in sloped and unstable environments, Ashland Fire & Rescue increased the number of personnel trained in advanced rope rescue to ensure that every incident would have sufficient trained personnel to effect a safe and efficient rescue.

While floods are not new to Ashland, more extensive flood training with the Army core of engineers gave responders new and vital

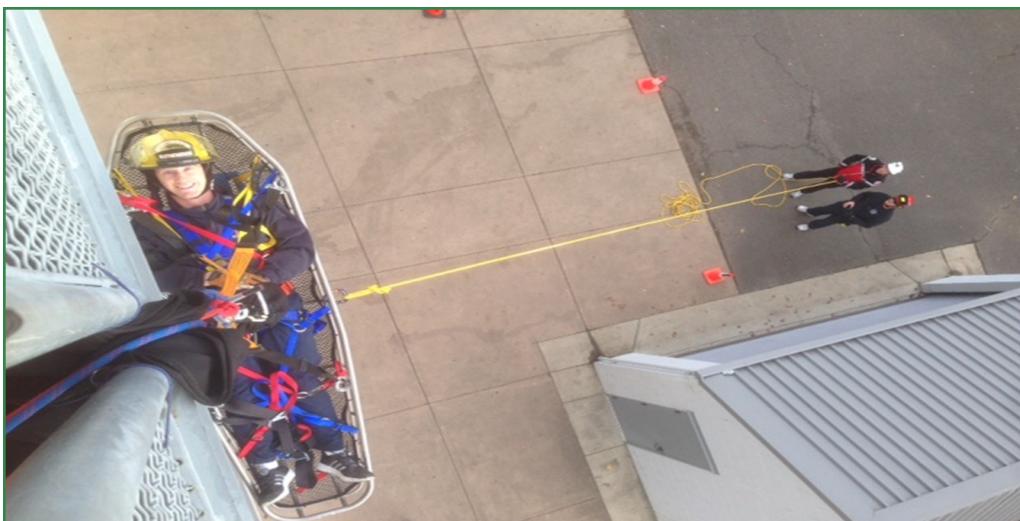
## TRAINING (continued)

information on how to work safer as well as integrate with volunteers to be more effective when mitigating the threat of floods.

The difficulty in training personnel increases significantly with each new elements of emergency response training firefighters are required to receive. Firefighters must meet mandated federal, state and local requirements that ensure both their safety and proficiency in a wide variety of disciplines. Without training grounds or a dedicated training facility firefighters must take to the streets, neighborhoods and parking lots. Despite the difficulty of training without proper facilities, Ashland Fire & Rescue is dedicated to provide firefighter training with the goal to become more effective in serving the public and to meeting the training requirements set forth by NFPA (National Fire Protection Association), ISO (Insurance Services Office) and DPSST (Department of Public Safety Standards and Training).



**Rookie Firefighter Training**



**Advanced Rope Rescue Training**

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT and PREPAREDNESS

The Fire Chief for Ashland is also the City's Emergency Manager. The Emergency Manager is responsible for the training of employees for response to an emergency as well as the City's hazard assessment and preparedness of the citizens and businesses for those hazards.

The department manages the City's mass notification or "reverse "9-1-1" system, known as Citizen Alert. This system also has the ability to send notifications to City employees and volunteers. The department and Jackson County Emergency Management are partners with this system. The contract was renewed in 2013 for two additional years. The department continues to market and encourage citizens to "opt-in" to

Citizen Alert which maximizes the system's benefit. The department also manages the 1700 AM emergency radio, and the smoke and wildfire hotline. This phone system carries a constant stream of emergency preparedness information and is updated during significant or emergency events.

In February the department conducted a table-top exercise for the City's Emergency Operations Center. The exercise scenario was that of a signifi-

cant communicable disease outbreak with quarantines put into effect. Each City department fills a role in an EOC activation, and these exercises are an opportunity for personnel to maintain proficiency with emergency management skills. During an actual emergency Ashland's EOC would be in contact with Jackson County's EOC to coordinate resource ordering and management. The county EOC is also our conduit to the state Office of Emergency Management.

The department is continuing with its ART (Ashland Response Team) program. This is a group of volunteers from Ashland who have had emergency response or emergency management experience. The department provides additional training as needed

including participation in courses offered by Homeland Security. This year two ART members attended an Enhanced Incident Command training course in College Station, Texas. These volunteers assist city personnel



**Second Annual "Ashland Is Ready" Citizen Preparedness Workshop**

during activations of the emergency operations center and may be summoned to field incident command posts during large events. This group meets once a month at Fire Station 1 where they prepare and train for activations.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (continued)



### EOC Exercise in February

The department conducted the second annual AIR (Ashland Is Ready!) workshop, a citizen-based program for emergency preparedness. Two workshops were held that provided information from experts on emergency preparedness, hazard identification and risk assessment. The event drew its capacity of 400 attendees who each received a 72-hour kit. With the popularity of this workshop, the department is planning to conduct a similar workshop each year as long as funding is identified.

The state of Oregon is increasing its efforts for citizen preparedness due to concerns of an event along the Cascadia Subduction Zone. A large seismic event occurs along this fault line approximately every 341 years with the last event happening in 1700. The state is planning a large state-wide exercise in

2016 that will utilize a scenario of a 8.0 to 9.0 magnitude Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake. The exercise will be called *Cascadia Rising* and the City of Ashland will participate in the exercise.

In concert with Jackson County Emergency Management, the department is in the process of updating the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan for both organizations. It is not expected that the plan will change a great deal and this effort will primarily be to update the action items.

The Fire Chief is taking the lead on a regional effort to promote citizen evacuation awareness and capability. This program will also promote the "Ready/Set/Go" federal evacuation strategy. This will be for all hazards and not just wildfires.



## PERSONNEL

2014 brought several changes to the makeup of Ashland Fire & Rescue.

In April, Firefighter Brian Anders accepted a position with Jackson County Fire District #3. We were disappointed to lose him and wish him well with his future firefighting career.

In June the department held a Captain's promotional exam. Five candidates started the exam process consisting of a written test and extensive practical scenarios. In the end, four candidates passed the exam and are now eligible for future promotions and are allowed to "work up" in the Captain's position according to department staffing requirements. The exam process was preceded by a captain's academy. Over a five month period firefighters participated in department led training designed to give them the necessary tools needed to perform the job of a fire captain.

We also said goodbye to Firewise Coordinator Ali True who left the department in June. A recruiting process to replace Ali ended with the hiring of Ashley Lara. As the position had been evolving over the last couple of years, Ashley was brought on with the new title of Fire Adapted Communities Coordinator.

Ashley Lara is a native of Bellingham Washington and has lived in Medford, OR, since 2010. In 2008, Ashley received a Bachelors of Science degree in Communication from Oregon Institute of Technology. That same year, her career as a public affairs officer began at the U.S. Forest Service on the Fremont-Winema National Forests. After two years of service, her passion for outreach and education prompted her to acquire a master's degree in management at Southern Oregon University.



**Fire Adapted Communities Coordinator  
Ashley Lara**

While attending school, she began working as a public affairs specialist for the Oregon Department of Forestry. Ashley is married to her husband Armando. They have an infant daughter, Andie.

In November the department hired firefighter Michael Mekkers. Michael comes to us from the northern part of the state.



**Probationary Firefighter/Paramedic  
Michael Mekkers**

After graduating from McMinnville High School he attended one year at Southern Oregon State College before return-

## PERSONNEL (continued)

ing home to continue his schooling at Oregon State University. In 2000 Michael earned a Bachelor's of Science degree in Forest Management. After graduating Michael worked for Les Schwab before being hired as a Natural Resource Coordinator for the Yamhill County Soil and Water Conservation District.

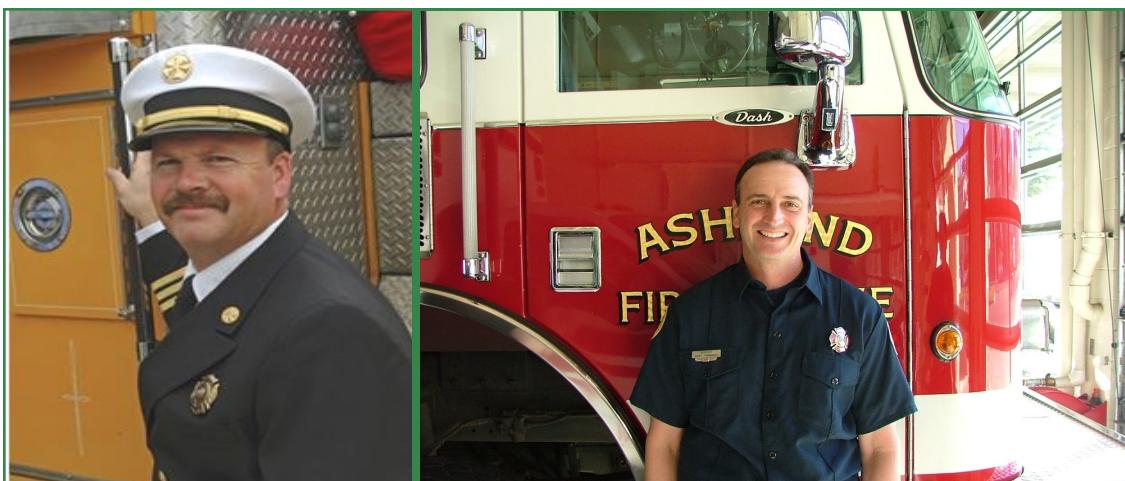
While working for the SWCD he joined the McMinnville Fire Department and Dayton Fire Department as a volunteer firefighter and earned his EMT Basic. In 2008 he decided to pursue a career in the EMS/Firefighting field and was accepted into OHSU's Paramedic program where he graduated in 2010 with an AAS in Paramedicine.

While testing for a full-time position at departments around the state (including Ashland Fire & Rescue) Michael worked as an Emergency Department Technician at Willamette Valley Medical Center and as a Paramedic for American Medical Response. He later accepted a position with West Valley Fire District in Wilsonville, Oregon.



**Fire Chief John Karns, CERT Coordinator Terri Eubanks and Risk Manager Sharlene Stephens accept the PRIMA's Achievement in Risk Management Award**

Michael is married to his wife Kristi who is a registered nurse. They have an infant son Aisea (pronounced Isaiah and spelled Polynesian) and are expecting a second child later this summer.



**Congratulations to Division Chief Greg Case and Captain Curt Formolo on Their Retirements**

# THE ASHLAND FIRE & RESCUE TEAM

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF



John Karns, Fire Chief  
*Unfunded* - Deputy Chief/Operations  
Greg Case, Division Chief  
Marguerite Hickman, Division Chief  
Chris Chambers, Division Chief  
Kimberley Summers, Administrative Assistant  
Ashley Lara, Fire Adapted Communities Coordinator  
Terri Eubanks, CERT Coordinator  
Jim Curty, Department Chaplain

## LINE PERSONNEL

### A SHIFT

Battalion Chief Dana Sallee  
Captain Steve Boyersmith  
Captain Todd Stubbs  
Engineer Rod LaCoste  
Engineer Lance Menold  
Firefighter Derek Rosenlund  
Firefighter Marshall Rasor  
Firefighter Brent Knutson  
Firefighter Nick Palmesano

### B SHIFT

Battalion Chief Scott Hollingsworth  
Captain Curt Formolo  
Captain Matthew Freiheit  
Engineer Robert Stephens  
Engineer Todd Beck  
Firefighter Jennifer Hadden  
Firefighter Ron Garfas-Knowles  
Firefighter Ashley Manning  
Firefighter Michael Mekkers

### C SHIFT

Battalion Chief David Shepherd  
Captain Kelly Burns  
Captain Dave Hanstein  
Engineer Justin Foss  
Engineer Dave Roselip  
Firefighter Trent Stoy  
Firefighter Shannon Turner  
Firefighter Robert Trask  
Firefighter Tim Hegdahl

**Engineer  
Lance Menold**  
**2014 Fire Chief's  
Award**



Engineer  
Lance Menold received the  
Fire Chief's Award for  
*"Outstanding customer service and a long term commitment to improving Ashland Fire & Rescue"*



**"Remember, when the disaster strikes, the time to prepare has passed"**





# Ashland Fire & Rescue



Christopher Briscoe

**PROUDLY SERVING ASHLAND AND  
THE ROGUE VALLEY  
SINCE 1887**



**541-482-2770**

**www.ashland.or.us  
(Opt-in to Citizen Alert Here)**

**www.ashlandcert.org**

**www.ashlandwatershed.org**

**1700 AM Ashland Emergency Radio**

**Smoke and Wildfire Hotline 541-552-2490**

**Follow Ashland Firewise on Facebook and Twitter**

