



OREGON OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

# THE GATED WYE

## SEPTEMBER 2021



## Wildfires continue to keep OFMAS resources busy

Dry, hot, and challenging weather conditions continued into August and kept firefighters busy for much of the month. The Northwest was the number one priority for resources for almost the entire month. September 1st marked the 50th day at Preparedness Level 5. This year broke the record of days at PL5, which was 40 days set in 2017, according to NWCC.

This year, the OSFM has responded to eight declared conflagrations since June 30th, 2021. In August, resources were mobilized to three different wildfires, and firefighters were brought in through EMAC from the state of Washington. **[READ MORE ON PAGE 6.](#)**

OSFM'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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# September marks one year since the 2020 Labor Day Fires



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This September will be the one-year mark of the devastating Labor Day wildfires that changed the course of so many lives across the state of Oregon. Over the last year, much has changed from the communities impacted by these fires to how the state responds to wildfires. The last year has not been easy as thousands of Oregonians move through the recovery process.

According to the Oregon Office of Emergency Management over the last year, just over 85 percent of the 3,024 home sites damaged in the Labor Day Fires have been cleaned statewide. More than 63,101 hazardous trees have been removed. As you travel through the areas impacted by these wildfires, you can see the impact and the rebuilding that continues to occur.

On September 7th, 2020 multiple fires ignited under critically hot and dry conditions and spread dramatically during multiple days of high winds. The result was multiple large fires burning across the state, over 1 million acres burned. 500,000 Oregonians were under an evacuation notice (Level 1, 2, or 3) and more than 40,000 had to evacuate their homes.

The firefight took a tremendous effort from OFMAS resources, 179 fire agencies contributed resources to support communities where fires threatened lives and structures. The collective response included nearly 300 firefighting apparatus and more than 2,000 members of Oregon's structural firefighting service, all deployed on an extended response to assist the state's coordinated response.



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# OSFM & OFCA honor fire service for response to 2020 Labor Day Fires

On September 7th, 2020, the Oregon fire service's actions transcended their normal call of duty to help their communities as many grappled with a historic wildfire event. In just 24-hours, 14 conflagrations were declared, as fires burned in 12 different counties. The fire service responded with one mission, to protect life and property.

To honor these heroic efforts, the Oregon Office of the State Fire Marshal in partnership with the Oregon Fire Chiefs Association is awarding every member of Oregon's fire service who served their community during the fires with a first-of-its-kind, Oregon Fire Storm Award. The heroism and bravery of this event exemplify what this bar represents.



orange signifies the dedication of those who fought these wildfires across the state.

First responders with the Idanha-Detroit Fire District were the first department to receive the award.

"You rose to service in the face of a momentous challenge and proceeded to go beyond your call of duty," State Fire Marshal Mariana Ruiz-Temple said when presenting the award to Idanha-Detroit Fire District. "Your heroism in bringing more than 80 members of the public through fire to safety is the embodiment of what this award represents."

The OSFM and OFCA will be working with the Oregon Fire Defense Board Chiefs over the next few weeks to distribute and determine who will receive the award.

The awards were designed after campaign bars or battle bars, which denote the particular campaign, battle, or region the recipient operated in to receive the award. The colors chosen for the award represent the sacrifice and historic nature of September 2020. The black bar represents the loss associated with the fires, the red bar represents the intensity of the fires and the



*Congratulations!*

# 2021 OFCA Meritorious Awards announced

The Oregon Fire Chiefs Association has announced the 2021 Meritorious Awards. Congratulations to the award winners and thank you for your service to your communities.

## **President Award**

State Fire Marshal  
Mariana Ruiz-Temple

## **Award of Excellence**

Lafayette Fire Department & New Carlton Fire District, Chief Terry Lucich

## **Medal of Valor**

Depoe Bay Fire District  
Firefighter Jason Spano

## **Distinguished Conduct**

Mohawk Valley Rural Fire Department  
Chief Steven Wallace, Division Chief Chris Barnes, Captain Jason Wallace, Firefighter Michael Baldwin

## **Distinguished Conduct**

Portland Fire & Rescue  
Lt. Damon Simmons, Lt. Rich Tyler, Firefighter Jesse Hellwege, Lt. Shon Christensen, Firefighter Adam Troupe, Firefighter Michael Schultz, Cpt. Thomas Lenhertz, Firefighter Andrew Ligatitch, Firefighter AJ Schaffer, LT. Kurt Smith, Cpt. Thomas Chipps, Firefighter Andre Bell-Watkins, Firefighter Tyson Reed.

## **Distinguished Conduct**

Canby Fire District  
Chief Jim Davis, Division Chief Matt English, Fireground Leader Duane Stoner, Firefighter Jack Sarrett, Firefighter James Patterson, Cpt. Andrew Aamodt, Firefighter Derrick Clar, Volunteer Firefighter Brook Davis, Volunteer Firefighter Ethan Dawson, Volunteer Firefighter Tyler Boyd.

## **Distinguished Conduct**

Hubbard Fire District  
Firefighter Robert Gendhar, Volunteer Firefighter Jason Thompson, Volunteer Firefighter Wyatt Jespersen.

## **Distinguished Conduct**

Woodburn Fire District  
Lt. Jon Koenig, Engineer Raul Garza, Volunteer Firefighter Troy Jordan.

## **Distinguished Conduct**

Seaside Fire & Rescue  
Lifeguard Clarisse Coventry

## **Distinguished Conduct**

Colton Fire District  
Lt. Tyler Carlson, Firefighter Matt Rodriguez, Apparatus Operator Mike Dechristoforo, Firefighter Nate Kulland, Lt. Jaeden Brown, Apparatus Operator Tom Judd, Firefighter Geri Fraijo, Firefighter Brian Benthin, Chief Kerry Benthin, Apparatus Operator Frank Kaneaster, Firefighter Tim Berhens, Apparatus Operator Justin Oberlander, Apparatus Eric Bjarnson, Chief Richard Beaudoin, Firefighter Kelly O'Laughlin.

## **Distinguished Conduct**

Stayton Fire District  
Asst. Chief Jay Alley

## **Distinguished Conduct**

Chiloquin Fire & Rescue  
Chief Michael Cook, Firefighter Leslie Cook

AWARDS CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

# OFCA Awards (Cont.)

## Unit Citation

Mohawk Valley Rural Fire District  
Firefighter Richard Davey, Firefighter Lindsay Hays, Firefighter/Emergency Responder Kyle Heflin, Firefighter Brandon Leavitt, Firefighter Austin Loshbaugh, Firefighter Jonathan McCartney, Firefighter Nick Krasneski, Firefighter Scott Moore, Firefighter Jerry Oglesbee, Firefighter Ashley Robertson, Firefighter Zachary Rylands, Firefighter Grace Thiel, Firefighter Angelique Wallace, Division Chief Dan Wallace, Firefighter Josephy Watson, Cpt. Cody Welling, Firefighter Manuel Williams, Firefighter Jason Bush, Firefighter Brent Peterson, Firefighter/Emergency Medical Responder Jesse Christofferson.

## Unit Citation

Depoe Bay Fire District  
Cpt. Eric Leonard, Engineer Darren Johnson, Engineer Andrew Larson, Acting Cpt. Nicolas Robinson, Firefighter/Paramedic Curtis Wilson, Firefighter Kristopher Aanes, Division Chief Thomas Jackson.

## Unit Citation

Chiloquin Fire & Rescue  
Chief/AEMT Mike Cook, Firefighter/EMT Carla Baker, Firefighter EMT Mark Baker, Firefighter John Brown, Firefighter/EMT Leslie Cook, Firefighter/EMT Melissa Danforth, Firefighter/Mechanic Nicholas Danforth, Firefighter/EMT Tyler Fowler, Firefighter/EMT Chance Friend, Firefighter Jonothan Giannoulis, Firefighter/Paramedic Timothy Gibson, Firefighter/AEMT Scott Girdner, Firefighter/Paramedic Renee Hansen, Firefighter/EMR Stuart Harrison, Cadet Firefighter/EMR Ethan Fowler, Cpt. David Knight, Firefighter Jessica Kostick, Firefighter/AEMT Spring Martinez, Firefighter/EMT Melissa Wolff, Firefighter/AEMT John Merwin, Firefighter/EMT Angela Montoya, Firefighter/EMR Tyler Leslie, Firefighter Jamie Palazzolo, Cpt./EMT Joshua Ryan, Firefighter/AEMT Eric Trygstad, Firefighter/EMT Yvette Rascon, Firefighter/Paramedic Don Siemsen, Firefighter/EMT Aiden Smith, Firefighter/EMR Bonnye Spray, Firefighter/EMR Mitch Cole, Firefighter/EMR Jay Brandt, EMR/Admin Yesenia Yocum, Firefighter/Paramedic Mark Belcastro, Firefighter Steven Stacey, Firefighter Gary Spray.

# New OFMA Board members announced

Two OSFM team members, as well as long-standing OSFM partners, have joined the OFMA Board. The OFMA supports the fire service and its stakeholders by providing education and forums for discussion, addressing current fire and life safety issues, and assisting in targeted efforts to fulfill our vision. Their vision is to reduce risk, save lives, and prevent loss. OFMA plays a vital role in training, legislation, codes, and communication. The membership has been working alongside Oregon Fire Chief's Association (OFCA) in the working group to define the Wildland Urban Interface in Oregon and create a risk map for all lands. OFMA is planning an annual Technical Conference in late October for the fire service. They will also be supporting the development and adoption of the new Defensible Space Code outlined in Senate Bill 762.

**OREGON  
Fire Marshals  
ASSOCIATION**

LEADING ~ SERVING ~ SUPPORTING

### The New OFMA Board:

Shawn Olson – President  
Tanner Farrington - Past - President  
Gert Zoutendijk – 1st Vice-President  
Craig Andresen (OSFM) – 2nd Vice-President  
Lora Ratcliff – Director  
Scott Goff – Director  
Amber Cross (OSFM) – Director  
Ryan Kragero – Director



## August wildfires prompt OFMAS response

Wildfires across the state continued to keep the Oregon fire service busy during August.

Governor Kate Brown invoked the Emergency Conflagration for two wildfires, the Middle Fork Complex in Douglas County and the Patton Meadow Fire in Lakeview.

Through the Oregon Fire Mutual Aid System (OFTAS) and the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), 223 firefighters mobilized as part of 21 task forces. Firefighters and resources were sent to the Skyline Ridge Complex in Douglas County as part of an immediate response request. Two task forces

from Yamhill and Polk County were assigned to the fire to help the Oregon Department of Forestry.

The first declared conflagration of August was on August 9th for the Middle Fork Complex, which was burning in Douglas County near Oakridge. Task forces from Clackamas, Lane, Linn, and Marion were mobilized to the complex to provide structural protection. OSFM's Red Incident Management Team was also sent and worked in unified command with ODF. During the deployment, firefighters assessed 471 structures near Oakridge. For the first time, task forces used a new placarding system to assess homes for defensible space and other criteria. The green placards are posted on the property to give firefighters real-time information and a snapshot view of what wildfire prevention preparations have been completed or need to be completed to a home or property. The task forces also worked on prep around infrastructure which included communication equipment and a train trestle. The Lane, Linn, and Marion County task forces assigned to the Middle Fork Complex as well as the IMT demobilized and returned to their home units by August 17th. The Clackamas County task force was reassigned to the Patton Meadow Fire.

On August 13th, the second conflagration was declared for the Patton Meadow Fire in Lake County near the city of Lakeview. The OSFM mobilized a total of nine task forces and requested the assistance of the state of Washington through EMAC. Two task forces were mobilized from the Evergreen State. The Blue IMT was also mobilized. In total 144 structural firefighters from Oregon and Washington worked for a week protecting life, homes, and other buildings from the fire. The Blue IMT and all task forces returned to their home units by August 21st.

On August 24th, the OSFM mobilized two Immediate Response task forces from Linn and Douglas County to the Devil's Knob Complex in Douglas County. These crews were called in to assist with structural protection.



Photo Courtesy: GE Forestry

## Oregon fire service honors fallen firefighter Frumencio Ruiz Carapia

The Oregon Office of the State Fire Marshal would like to offer condolences to the family, friends, colleagues, and those who knew 56-year old Frumencio Ruiz Carapia. The loss of a firefighter reverberates throughout the entire firefighting community. He was tragically killed in an accident while fighting the Gales Fire on the Middle Fork Complex.

According to the Lane County Sheriff's Office, on August 23rd, Ruiz Carapia was working on the eastern flank of the Gales fire in Lane County when a falling tree struck him. Despite the immediate efforts by those around him, Ruiz Carapia did not survive his injuries and died on scene.

The Lane County Sheriff's Office investigated and determined that this accident was not from an active tree-cutting operation. The Sheriff's Office says the tree unexpectedly snapped and fell to the ground.

A memorial service is being planned; the details of the service have not been announced. The OSFM will share details as they are released.



## September marks 20 years since 9/11 attacks

This month will mark 20 years since the 9/11 attack on the U.S. that took the lives of thousands of Americans including 343 firefighters.

To commemorate the day the names of every person killed in the attack will be read. During the service, organizers say they will observe six moments of silence, acknowledging when each of the World Trade Center towers were struck and fell and the times corresponding to the attack on the Pentagon and the crash of flight 93.

This year's ceremony will be exclusively for 9/11 family members.

At sundown, the annual "Tribute in Light" will once again illuminate the sky in commemoration of the anniversary of the attacks.

Added to this year's tribute, buildings across New York City and the nation will be bathed in blue lights, to show solidarity with those marking the somber anniversary.



# OSFM readies for October and fire prevention month

October is recognized as Fire Prevention Month in Oregon. This year's theme from the National Fire Protection Agency is: Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety. This year, the

OSFM is launching a campaign in a similar fashion, "What is your smoke alarm saying." The campaign is focused on knowing the different sounds of your smoke, and CO alarm and what they mean.

In a fire, seconds can mean the difference between a safe escape and a tragedy. It is important that every member of the community take some time every October to make sure they understand how to stay safe in case of a fire.

The OSFM will be rolling out to our fire service partners in late September messaging to help people learn the sounds of their alarm. Each week will have a different message from what a single chirp means to when it is time to replace a smoke or CO alarm.

As part of the campaign, the OSFM will be sharing content on social media using the hashtag, #KnowYourBleepingAlarm. A social media kit will be distributed in several different languages to the fire service for use across their different social media platforms.

The goal of the campaign is to educate the public on the importance of these alarms and how they are there to save lives.

**YOUR SMOKE ALARM IS TRYING TO TELL YOU SOMETHING.**



#KnowYourBleepingAlarm



## Oregon, OSFM mark September as National Preparedness Month

September is marked across the U.S. as National Preparedness Month. This year the Oregon Office of Emergency Management will kick off a campaign "Honor with Action. The goal is to honor those who lost their lives, loved ones, homes, and livelihoods in the 2020 wildfires with action.

The OSFM and other state agencies and partners will be taking part in the month-long call to action. OEM says there are actions people can take now that include staying informed, being ready and

helping where you can seem overwhelming, but taking simple steps now can make all the difference in the event of a disaster. Every Oregonian can be ready for emergencies – it's about doing what you can where you are now to keep yourself and your family safe.

OEM urges Oregonians to be Two Weeks Ready, make Go-kits, sign up for alerts, talk with neighbors, know evacuation levels/routes, and check on vulnerable populations as part of being prepared.

# The OSFM wraps up Oregon county fair tour

OSFM staff and our partner agencies embarked on a fun adventure in July and August traveling to 21 Oregon County Fairs to share messages of fire safety. The team talked to people about working smoke alarms, the sounds a smoke alarm makes and the importance of having a family escape plan and meeting place.

"Kids of course are happy to get a pencil or a sticker, their parents are happy to have someone talk to them about fire safety." OSFM Youth Fire Safety Trainer Laura Chaffey said. "It's an affirming feeling when parents continue the conversation with their kiddos. I know that when they get home, they will talk about an escape plan."

The team traveled to every corner of the state logging 5277 miles. The focus was to reach as many of Oregon's diverse communities as possible.

"It was helpful to be able to answer some technical questions that members of the public presented, OSFM Deputy Fire Marshal, Craig Andresen said. "Many kids don't know what their smoke alarm sounds like or if it works. Several families made determinations to go home and build a fire escape plan.

The OSFM staff worked with the Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Department of Forestry, US Forest Service, numerous inter-agency Fire Prevention Cooperatives, city, county, and contracted fire protection agencies to make the fair tour possible.

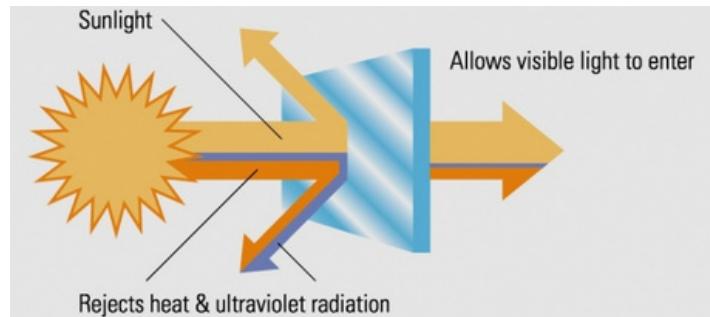


# CODES CORNER: Learning about Emergency Responder Radio Coverage (ERRC)

First responder safety is of the utmost importance when responding to an emergency. There are many variables that can affect their safety. One item that can improve the safety of the first responders is Emergency Responder Radio Coverage (ERRC).

ERRC can be affected by various types of building materials; one of those is windows. As buildings become greener so have windows. Today's windows are more effective at keeping the heat in or out and are labeled Low-E. Low Emissivity (Low-E) windows have a coating that is used within the layers of glass that minimizes the amount of energy that can pass through them. The coating is comprised of a very thin layer of either tin or silver and can attenuate or shield transmission of wavelength, Ultraviolet (UV), and Infrared (IR), in the spectrum without reducing the amount of sunlight entering the building.

The coating works much like a thermos. If the thermos is filled with a hot liquid, the thermos will reflect cold on the outside while reflecting the hot on the inside, thus keeping the liquid hot. It also works the opposite way as well. Keeping cold in and heat out. Low-E windows reduce heating and cooling costs within buildings.

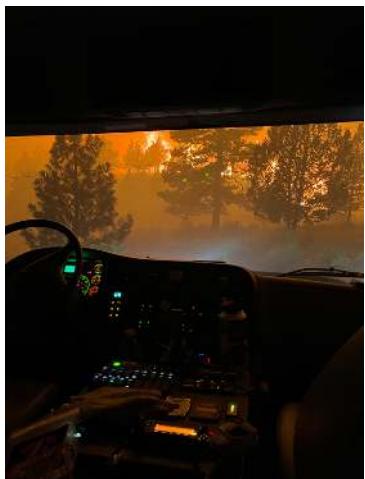


The E coating not only shields the UV and IR wavelengths but also reduces Ultra-High Frequency (UHF) wavelengths used by first responders. By blocking the wavelengths, it reduces the number of UHF wavelengths that can enter and exit a building and can reduce or completely block radio communication between first responders inside and out of the building.

Not only do Low-E windows block radio communication but other building materials such as masonry, steel, and concrete can too. Portions of buildings below grade such as basements, along with the size of the building can affect signals as well. ERRC systems are referred to as BDA (Bi-Directional Amplifier) Systems, Radio Amplifier System, DAS (Distributed Antenna System), or Public Safety Repeaters. The Oregon Fire Code (OFC) in Section 510 requires that "all new buildings, as described in Section 510.1.1, shall have approved radio coverage for emergency responders ..." inside the building depending on the type of public safety coverage network of the jurisdiction existing outside the building.

The OFC requires ERRC systems in buildings with one or more basements or below-grade building levels and underground buildings, buildings with more than five (5) stories in height, buildings more than 50,000 square feet in size, and any building that does not meet the requirements section of Section 510, OFC 510.1.

These systems are essential for the safety of all first responders. It is important for fire officials to work with developers early in the construction process with regard to an EERC system. Refer to TA 17-02 for more information regarding ERRC systems.



# Contact Us

Have an idea for a story or subject you would like to know more about?

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