



OREGON OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL

THE GATED WYE

MAY 2022



PREVENT WILDFIRES

#BelieveInFireSafety

MAY MEANS WILDFIRE AWARENESS MONTH

Preparing Oregonians, visitors, and communities for the threat of wildfire is the top priority in May. Oregon Governor Kate Brown has declared the month Wildfire Awareness Month.

Each week has been given a designated focus, not only on how to prevent wildfires but prepare for them as well.

The OSFM and partner agencies have launched a campaign to spark action and help cut down on human-caused fires.

READ MORE ON PAGE 2.

OSFM'S MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER

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HIDDEN DANGER!

Keep decks and patios clean of debris and clear of anything that could catch fire during times of high fire danger.



SPREAD THE WORD FOR WILDFIRE AWARENESS MONTH IN MAY

Over the last few years, Oregon has seen an increase in wildfire activity across the state. These wildfires have increasingly burned through communities, upending lives and changing the landscape for decades to come. The Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) and its partners are taking part in Wildfire Awareness Month to prepare Oregonians. Below is a calendar of weekly topics.

May 2nd - 8th: OSFM - defensible space

May 9th - 15th: ODF - escaped debris burning (#1 wildfire issue statewide)

May 16th - May 22nd: ODOT - vehicle fires (Leading source of wildfires each summer during fire season)

May 23rd - May 29th: PNWCG and KOG - recreational campfires ahead of Memorial Day (#3 wildfire issue during fire season)

May 30th: OEM - evacuation levels and evacuation preparations and checklists prior to fire season

The OSFM has put together a social media kit for the fire service and its partners to share during the month of May. An email with a link to the kit was sent out in April. To request a copy, reach out to OSFM Public Affairs.



LETS TALK ABOUT DEFENSIBLE SPACE

Good defensible space can prevent embers from igniting a home, but it can also prevent flames from reaching a home altogether. Oregonians can protect their home and community from wildfire with some simple steps.

A key to good defensible space is to keep it defined, keep grass and weeds cut low and always be prepared to respond to wildfire. The OSFM urges everyone to look around their property. Look for areas where glowing embers could ignite spot fires and vulnerable areas like decks, patios, and fences that can spread flames to your home. The most significant risk of buildings catching on fire during a wildfire is the advancing ember shower that can reach your property long before an actual flame front.

“Wildfire safety starts with all of us and our property. Now is a good time to take action to prepare our homes, families, and communities for wildfires by starting on our property before there is smoke on the horizon,” Oregon State Fire Marshal Mariana Ruiz-Temple said.

To address the risk of wildfire, the Office of State Fire Marshal recommends the following steps people can take right now to help protect themselves against the upcoming fire season:

- *Clear roofs and gutters of dead leaves, debris, and pine needles that could catch embers*
- *Ensure your roof is in good repair*
- *Move any flammable material away from exterior walls, i.e., mulch, flammable plants, leaves and needles, firewood piles*
- *Remove anything stored underneath decks or porches*
- *Give your home a non-combustible area where a fire in the landscape can't reach your home*
- *Keep lawns and native grasses mowed during high fire danger conditions.*
- *Remove ladder fuels (vegetation under trees) so a surface fire cannot reach the crowns.*

While defensible space at the individual home offers protection, communities can be better protected when every home in the area creates defensible space. This significantly increases the chances that more homes will survive a wildfire event.

“By taking a neighborhood approach to defensible space and community preparedness, you also protect our firefighters,” Ruiz-Temple said. “Ultimately, individuals taking the right steps on their property before fire season make firefighters safer and more effective.”

KEEP IT CLEAN & CLEAR

Clean and clear debris (leaves, pine needles, branches) from your roof, gutters, & chimney.



LET'S TALK: WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS

JOIN US VIRTUALLY EVERY **WEEK IN MAY** FOR A WEBINAR FOCUSED ON PREPARING OREGON FOR WILDFIRE.

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- MAY 3RD:** FINANCIAL PREPAREDNESS
- MAY 12TH:** HOME IGNITION
- MAY 19TH:** EVACUATION PREPAREDNESS
- MAY 24TH:** FIRE RESISTANT PLANTS



These webinars are a part of the OSFM's Fire Adapted Oregon initiative and are focused on preparing Oregonians for wildfire. Our Fire Risk Reduction Specialists are working with our partners and experts in their fields to provide these educational opportunities.

We would like to thank our partners in advance who have helped to make these educational webinars possible and to our presenters who will be sharing their expertise!

We look forward to seeing you at these webinars this May as we all work to be better prepared for wildfire.

OSFM TO HOST MAY WILDFIRE WEBINARS

With May being Wildfire Awareness Month in Oregon, the Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) will be hosting weekly webinars on several different topics ranging from financial readiness for wildfire to a fascinating look at fire-resistant plants.

UPCOMING WEBINARS

May 12th 6-7PM

Home Ignition

May 19th 12-1PM

Be Ready, Be Set, GO!

May 24th 12-1PM

Fire Resistant Plants



JENNIFER WARREN JOINS FIRE RISK REDUCTION TEAM

Please welcome Jennifer Warren to the OSFM! Jennifer joins the Community Risk Reduction Team as a Fire Risk Reduction Specialist for District A – Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington, Columbia, Clatsop, and Tillamook counties.

Jen comes from ODF where she ran the visitor services unit at the Tillamook Forest Center. She had previously been an Executive Assistant to the State Forester and the National Fire Plan Coordinator while at ODF.

Jen brings a wealth of knowledge in working with the public, interpreting policy, and managing multi-level stakeholder relationships. She holds a B.S. in Resource Recreation and Tourism. We are so happy to have her on the OSFM team!

OSFM, NFPA HOST FIRST HOME IGNITION ZONE TRAINING

The Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) held the first in a series of Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) trainings for fire service members and others. The OSFM has contracted with NFPA to offer 13, two-day course across Oregon.

Clackamas Co. Fire Dist. #1 hosted the first class April 20th – 21st at the training center in Clackamas County.

The Assessing Structure Ignition Potential for wildfire (ASIP) is an NFPA training which teaches wildfire behavior, structure exposure and the concepts of the HIZ and structure ignition potential. This training is designed to increase understanding of wildland-urban interface fire mitigation, show how to assess risk to individual homes, and how to make recommendations for proper mitigation measures.

These courses will also include a half day field exercise where students will get hands-on experience putting their new knowledge into practice. (The field exercise is weather and location permitting).

To learn more about upcoming course check with your regions Fire Risk Reduction Specialist. You can find contacts for them on the OSFM' website.



WELCOME LANCE LIGHTY

Lance Lighty will be joining as the Logistics Chief, overseeing the Planning & Logistics Unit, fleet, Safety & Training Unit, and the OrSAP Program.

Chief Lighty comes to OSFM with more than 30 years of fire service experience. Lance has worked closely with our office as a member of several of our various response programs; currently holding the position of Incident Commander of the Green Incident Management Team.

OSFM IMT'S PREPARED FOR UPCOMING WILDFIRE SEASON

For the first time since 2019, the OSFM's Incident Management Teams (IMTs) met in person at their Annual IMT Training Conference in Newport. The Conference provides teams the opportunity to meet new team members, to work within their sections on preseason strategies, to receive agency and legislative updates from agency administrators, to hear from experts on the upcoming fire forecast, and more. The conference is also used as an opportunity to train and plan for the upcoming fire season.

OSFM coordinates three All-Hazards Incident Management Teams comprised of local fire service personnel, tribal, state, county, and local employees. The teams are mobilized at the direction of the State Fire Marshal to respond to a fire or other emergency that has overwhelmed the control and resources of local emergency responders.

At the conference, the Operations Section and Information Section held a joint training exercise focused on improving communications for communities members in areas impacted by a wildfire or other calamity. Several mock scenarios were set up to simulate a public meeting, an operations video, and others.

The OSFM also honored three IMT members who are retiring. [**READ MORE ON PAGE 08.**](#)



LELAND HUNTER JOINS REGIONAL MOBILIZATION TEAM

Leland Hunter joins the OSFM as a Regional Mobilization Coordinator for Klamath & Lake counties. Leland is recently retired from the US Forest Service Bly Ranger District and also brings more than 30 years of fire service experience to OSFM. Leland's relationships within his region are well-established, giving him a head start as we move towards another potentially challenging fire season.



OSFM PROGRAM FOCUSES

HOW THE OSFM CAN SUPPORT YOUR AGENCY

DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHALS

FIRE CODE ENFORCEMENT & INSPECTIONS
FIRE INVESTIGATIONS
CODE INTERPRETATION GUIDANCE
HEALTHCARE FACILITIES
FIRE DEPARTMENT ACCESS & WATER SUPPLY PLANS

REGIONAL MOBILIZATION COORDINATORS

MOBILIZATION SUPPORT & REQUESTS
MUTUAL AID ASSISTANCE & GUIDANCE
INCIDENT RESPONSE NEEDS
MOBILIZATION PLAN ASSISTANCE

FIRE RISK REDUCTION SPECIALISTS

WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS
COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION PLANNING & FUNDING ASSISTANCE
HOME IGNITION ZONE TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
EDUCATION & OUTREACH
COMMUNITY EVENTS

HOW THE OSFM FIELD STAFF CAN HELP YOU

Over the last nine months the Office of State Fire Marshal has been working diligently to bring on new staff to meet the growing threat of wildfire and serve the needs of Oregon. Since Senate Bill 762 (wildfire omnibus bill) was passed last summer, the OSFM has brought on more field staff, Fire Risk Reduction Specialists, Regional Mobilization Coordinators and more Deputy State Fire Marshals. Each of these three field staff have a critical role to play within the OSFM to help carry out our mission.

These staff are here to help the Oregon fire service and the communities they serve. Below are the different ways they can lend a hand.

Fire Risk Reduction Specialists: The FRR's are tasked with helping communities be prepared for wildfire through outreach, education and community action. This team recently has been working on wildfire preparedness through webinars, community talks and home ignition zone training.

Regional Mobilization Coordinators: The RMC's are tasked with helping being the conduit between the Oregon fire service and OSFM. They are support to help with mobilizations and planning assistance among other things.

Deputy State Fire Marshals: The DSFM's are tasked with fire code enforcement & inspections, fire investigations and can provide code guidance if needed. They are also the person to contact with questions about fire department access and water supply planning.



RETIRING IMT MEMBERS HONORED IN APRIL

In April, the OSFM honored three Incident Management Team members who have retired from the teams.

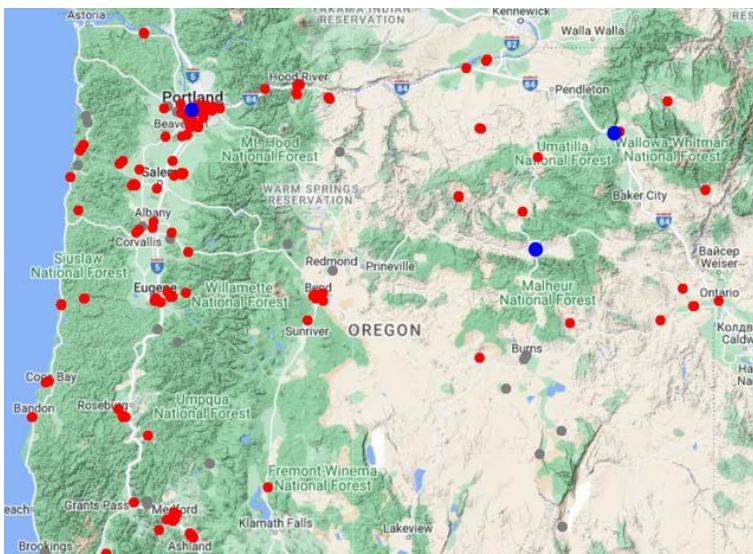
Chief Les Hallman retired from the Oregon Fire Service in April 2022 and has also decided to retire from the Incident Management Teams as well following ten years of service, six of which were dedicated to being Green Team's Incident Commander. In addition to Oregon and California deployments, Chief Hallman led a team to Florida in response to the aftermath of Hurricane Michael.

Jamie Kometz, who is now the OSFM's Agency Operations Center Manager, joined the teams in 2008 and was first deployed to the Woodburn Bombing Line of Duty Death. Kometz served as a Finance Section Chief for the green team, where she continued for 14 years. Kometz has not only served during emergencies impacting Oregonians but has also deployed to help in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy in New York (2011) and Hurricane Michael in Florida (2018).

Brent Griffiths retirement from the OSFM IMT program comes as he takes on a new role as the Regional Mobilization Coordinator for Lane, Douglas, Benton, and Linn Counties. Brent joined the teams in 2014 as a Finance Section Chief. He's served on both the Blue and Red Teams. Griffiths has been deployed to more than a dozen Oregon conflagrations and has deployed to Washington and Florida to assist with public health and recovery efforts.

The OSFM would like to thank these three for their dedication and service to others.





Grant Type: ● Pending ● School ● Hospital



OSFM OFFERS GRANT FUNDS TO SCHOOLS AND HOSPITALS FOR DEFENSIBLE SPACE PROJECTS

As Oregon moves into another summer with unfavorable wildfire predictions, the Office of State Fire Marshal has been working over the last few months to ready Oregonians. The office has been working on a number of projects to meet the intent behind Senate Bill 762, the wildfire omnibus bill.

To help mitigate wildfire risk and protect Oregon communities, the OSFM has established a new wildfire initiative, Fire Adapted Oregon, dedicated to preparing Oregon's communities for wildfires. Within this initiative, the OSFM is piloting the Defensible Space Incentive (DSI) Grant to address the growing wildfire risk.

In March, the OSFM opened this grant opportunity to Oregon schools and hospitals to improve or create defensible space.

As of April 27th, the OSFM has funded 159 school sites across 78 school organizations (school district, college, or private school), three hospitals and 35 pending school sites. In total the OSFM has allocated roughly \$200,000 in DSI Grants.

The above map shows where the grant funds have been dispersed around Oregon.

ABOUT THE GRANT:

The DSI Grant is a one-time \$1,000 grant available to any Oregon public or private school, university, or hospital. This grant was created to encourage applicant agencies to improve their vegetative management practices (landscaping) and maintain defensible space.

The funding is geared towards better protecting the places where children and people may be staying that may need assistance. The grant is always a great way for our office to help teach community members of all ages the benefits of defensible space. The OSFM's hope is every school and hospital will take advantage of this grant opportunity.

faces of fire: OSFM REGIONAL MOBILIZATION COORDINATOR DAVID CALL

Just a few days into his career with the Office of State Fire Marshal in June of 2021, David Call was put to the test.

"I was hired on June 14th and June 20th, I was on my first fire," Call said.

Call works in Central Oregon as a Regional Mobilization Coordinator, one of seven across the state. His job is to be a conduit between the Oregon fire service and the OSFM. The goal is to coordinate resource needs and get them to an incident like wildfire, quickly. He did just that in the week after he was hired.

"It is really important, especially in the smaller areas throughout Oregon where their resources get tapped a lot quicker," Call said. "If there is a big incident, they need all the support they can get. The faster the state can be ready to send those task forces with the boosted capacity for the locals, the quicker that incident can be managed."

Call began his career in the fire service while stationed in Kodiak, Alaska with the U.S. Coast Guard.

"I had a co-worker who volunteered at the fire department up there," Call said, "so I started helping them with EMS calls and training to gain skills to be better on the MEDEVACs."

After the Coast Guard, Call settled in Central Oregon where he studied structure fire science and worked with Bend Fire and with the BLM in wildland firefighting. When the OSFM opened the Regional Mobilization Coordinator position, Call knew that was the job for him.

"It is a great job, I love it." Call said.

With one fire season with the OSFM under his belt and years of experience, Call has been busy preparing for the next, working with partners and fire agencies to make Oregon, Response Ready. David Call is one of the OSFM's Faces of Fire.



ABOUT THE REGIONAL MOBILIZATION COORDINATORS (RMCs): Seven Regional Mobilizations Coordinators were hired through SB762. The RMCs are a part of the OSFM's Response Ready Oregon Initiative to bolster capacity and modernize wildfire response within the Oregon Fire Mutual Aid System.

FIRE INVESTIGATORS COURSE GOES HANDS ON IN ALBANY

Sifting through the burnt debris on a table, three members of the Oregon fire service work to figure how the home they are standing in caught on fire.

This scene was just a scenario as the the Office of State Fire Marshal's Fire & Life Safety Division hosted their final 40-hour NFPA certified fire investigators course. The division is pausing for wildfire season and will resume courses in the fall.

The latest course was held in partnership with Albany Fire. Attendees spent five days in Albany learning the fundamentals of fire investigations. Course instructors also prepared demonstrations to illustrate those points.

On the final day of the course, attendees were able to go through a mock fire investigation. Albany Fire provides a home ahead of a planned burn to learn for the OSFM to use. Deputies set up several scenarios and brought in actors through Linn County CERT to create a realistic experience for those taking the class. Those in the course were able to assess and look at signs of how the fires started as well as interview people (actors) at home at the time of the fire. The object was to determine the origin and cause.

Over the summer months, the Fire & Life Safety Division plans to work to improve on the course. The OSFM will announce future class opportunities for those interested in fire investigations once the schedule has been set.

A huge thank you to the Deputy State Fire Marshals who have put countless hours and energy into making this course a success.





ALL SMILES AS THOUSANDS TALK FIRE SAFETY AT THE OREGON AG FEST

Teamwork and partnership led to success at the Oregon Ag Fest in Salem in April. The OSFM and 11 other partner agencies staffed an interactive booth to teach kids and parents the importance of home fire safety and wildfire preparedness.

The booth included a fire engine from Chemeketa's Fire Program, and an engine from Marion County Fire District #1.

Families were able to check out the equipment. Also, part of the experience was a firefighter obstacle course for kids to see what it's like to be a firefighter. OSFM staff and our partners were able to talk with parents and families on several topics including the importance of working smoke alarms and home fire escape planning.

The OSFM estimates those staffing the booth spoke with an estimated 5,000 people during the event. The OSFM would like to thank our partners for putting together such a successful experience and educational opportunity.

Thank you to Marion County Fire District #1, Chemeketa Community College – Fire Program, Grand Ronde Emergency Services, Marion County Sheriff's Office, USDA, USFS, BLM, Woodburn Fire Dept., Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue, and Nestucca Rural Fire Protection District. A special thanks to Turner Fire, which started this outreach several years ago.





OFMA CONFERENCE COMING UP SOON

Register today for the upcoming Oregon Fire Marshal's Association conference. This year's annual business meeting and conference is being held at the Best Western Agate Beach in Newport. May 23rd-26th, 2022.

Those interested in attending can register online. [Oregon Fire Marshals Association - Events \(wildapricot.org\)](http://Oregon Fire Marshals Association - Events (wildapricot.org))

WELCOME JIM KUSZ TO THE OSFM

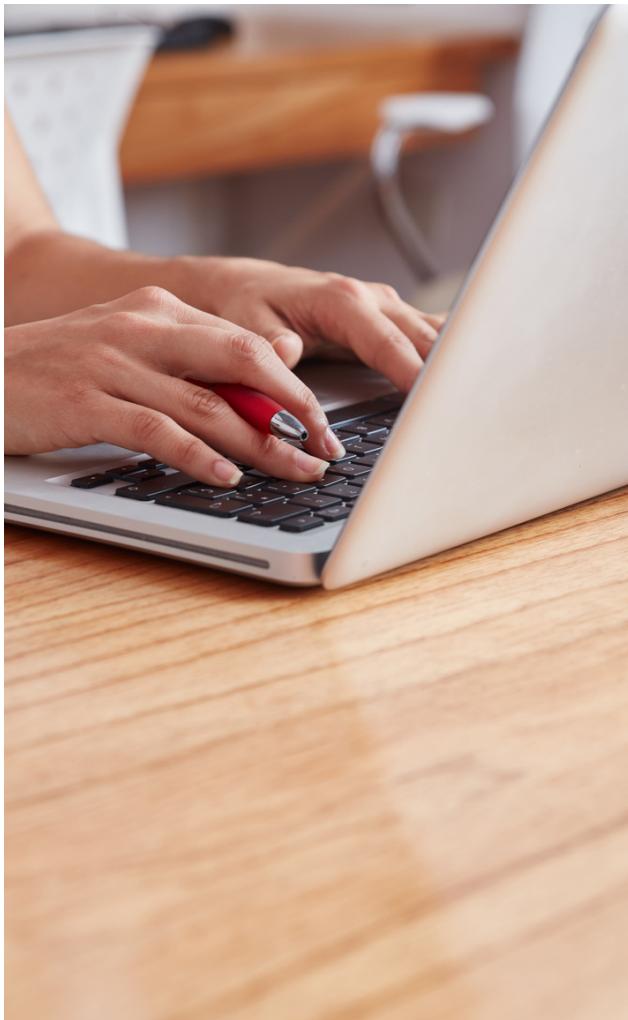
Jim Kusz joins the Community Risk Reduction Team as a Fire Risk Reduction Specialist for District F- Josephine, Jackson, Lake, and Klamath counties.

Jim has been a life-long Life Safety Educator. He has a passion for fire prevention and all hazard safety. Jim has been a fire service training officer, safety officer, public information officer, and a fire and life safety educator. He has also been a qualified wildland and structural firefighter.

Jim developed the "Just Add Water Safety" (JAWS) program, has been a key presenter and educator on tsunami/earthquake evacuation and procedures training and has been instrumental in exercises and drills throughout Oregon on seismic threats.

Jim is also a well known videographer, producer, and owns his own production company. Jim holds a B.A. in Communications from Northeastern Illinois University.





DATA CONNECTION: NFIRS MODULE TRAINING NOW AVAILABLE

The NFIRS Program coordination team is excited to announce that NFIRS trainings for the Basic, Fire, Structure Fire, and Wildland Fire Modules are now available. These recorded sessions can be accessed by selecting the desired session link found on the OSFM Website.

[NFIRS Basic Module Training](#)

[NFIRS Fire Module Training](#)

[NFIRS Structure Module Training](#)

[NFIRS Wildfire Module Training](#)

******Be on the lookout in the near future for opportunities to sign up for full day, in person, NFIRS and Elite training sessions for basic and intermediate users. ******

If you encounter any difficulties, or have coding questions, reach out to the OSFM Analytics & Intelligence Unit at osfmdata@osp.oregon.gov. The A&I team is here to help!



SIMONE CORDERY-COTTER JOINS OSFM COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION UNIT

Please welcome Simone Cordery-Cotter to the OSFM Community Risk Reduction team as a Fire Risk Reduction Specialist for District D- Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Morrow, and Umatilla counties.

Simone most recently worked for a non-profit working with citizens groups and mentoring them on local government policy processes. She has been part of California Governor Newsome's Blue Ribbon task force that included Federal, Tribal, and non-governmental organizations that eventually led to a \$536 million dollar bill to assist high fire risk communities. Simone has also been on the frontlines of organizing community groups for the Firewise USA ® program and connecting homeowners and risk reduction guidance and education. Simone holds two B.A.'s in History and Film and Photography from Montana State University. She is currently working on her Master's in Public Policy from Portland State.

OSFM CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Deputy State Fire Marshal - Multiple Districts

You will oversee, coordinate and provide fire and life safety code interpretation and enforcement, fire cause investigation, and fire prevention education services in an assigned district. This position also responds to all large-scale hazard emergencies across the state as needed. This position is a general service district deputy.

[FULL JOB POSTING](#)

Regional Mobilization Coordinator - North Central

As a Regional Mobilization Coordinator, you will be part of a dynamic team in the Emergency Response Unit and focusing on coordinating and managing Oregon's Fire Mutual Aid System in support of the structural fire.

[FULL JOB POSTING](#)



MARK THE CALENDAR

May 3rd: [Insurance Preparedness Webinar](#)

May 5th: OFCAB Meeting

May 12th: [Home Ignition Webinar](#)

May 18th: Defensible Space Code Meeting

May 19th: [Be Ready., Be Set, GO! Webinar](#)

May 24th: [Fire Resistant Plants Webinar](#)

PLAN AHEAD TO JUNE

June 3rd - 4th: [HIZ Course - La Pine \(Registration closes 5/19\)](#)

June 6th - 7th: [HIZ Course - Stayton \(Registration closes 5/22\)](#)





Contact Us

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

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