

Region Seven Fire Investigation Council
November 18, 2008
Wapato Fire Department

The meeting was called to order by acting Chairperson Ron Rutherford at 0910.

Attendance:

Don Linder, YCFPB
Ron Rutherford, YCFPB
Joe Seemiller, KVFR
Santos Valdez, Wapato FD
Gary Hanna, Selah FD

Bill Steele, UGFD
Don Fletcher, YCFPB
Barry Kerth, KCFMO
Larry Ehrhardt, Wapato PD

Introduction of Guests: None

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Joe, seconded by Santos to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

Treasures Report: \$8,904.30

Deposit:

State Reimb:

Contract \$

Checks Written: 3132 – Safeco Insurance (Region Trlr) \$209.00

3133 – NFPA (2008 921 Books/FP Handbook) \$1,073.83

Note -- \$211.43 to be reimbursed by Yakima County

Current Balance: \$7,621.47

Bills:

Communications:

Region 4 sent an email requesting anyone interested in CFI practical testing to contact them so they can plan. Discussion held regarding this issue. It was reported that Yakima has 4, Barry and Don Fletcher interested. Bill reported that there are 10 openings of which Region 4 will fill 6 positions, leaving 4 open for first come, first served. Yakima interested in Region 7 hosting a test. Ron to contact Mark Yaden, Region 8 to see if they have anyone to test and status of burn cell materials. Joe willing to assist. One suggestion was to look into converting a metal container into burn cell and find a permanent location for it. This would help reduce manpower needs to construct burn cells. The need for the Courtroom testimony portion was also discussed. Possible Glenn Johnson and Jim Feuhrer could instruct, Bill could test. More information will be provided as details become available.

Old Business:

Ron and Don L. attended NFPA 921 update at Spokane Roundtable. Morning went pretty slow, but afternoon picked up and overall class was beneficial. Mike Lee was the instructor, this was the second time he taught the class. He is a very capable investigator but has little instructor experience. He sought input from class on how to improve course. Region will host an update class; however, instructor selection is still an issue. CFI Trainer.Net also has an update available.

Electrical class is still being worked on. Gary sent out some letters to the insurance industry, received 1 reply. Noel is an option; primary concern would be to keep him focused on what we want. Ron and Derald will follow-up.

Vehicle fire class discussed. Larry indicated Rich Fowler of YPD is a contact. Kevin Nee has a 3-day class; however he is limiting his teaching commitments for the coming year. Larry will contact Rich.

New Business:

Barry announced Brenda has returned to Kittitas County as the Fire Marshal. Barry has transferred over to work with her. Things are a bit unsettled, limited budget, other issues to be worked out.

Bill informed the Region that Union Gap Fire may be placing one of its rescue/support vehicles on surplus. If the Region is interested in replacing the trailer, this vehicle may be available with the stipulation Union Gap will not be able to house it. If the City Council approves, Bill would attempt to have the vehicle donated. Bill will continue discussion with City. Vehicle will be at next meeting so everyone can take a look and see if it meets our needs. Gary suggested that if we do obtain, a maintenance program needs to be put in place. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

Good of the Order:

Ron and Derald investigated a house fire in Parker where the occupants were in the process of being evicted. The house had been sold recently, and current renters were on notice to move. An adult female was home at time of fire. The fire was discovered, she went outside, was yelling for someone to call the fire department. She went back in, realized fire was growing, went back out where a neighbor told her the fire department was notified after hearing call for help. The brother of the adult renter has a history of arson, so there were some initial concerns as to cause/origin of fire. As the investigation unfolded, it was determined a portable heater had been brought inside, the house was cool, the

adult female turned the heater on, it was sitting next to a chair with foot stool. The heater wiring was in poor condition and you know the rest of the story.

Ron investigated a 5th wheel travel trailer fire. Unit had power; two electric heaters were inside, along with a cat.

Derald and Don L. investigated a residential fire in Glead. Homeowners had just had Christmas lights installed by Senske. Father and son home at time, smelled smoke, investigated found fire starting garage along wall. Attempt to get garden hose uncoiled and connected failed, call made and son reentered house to make sure father was out. By this time, fire had grown considerably, traveling outside of garage through open door, igniting exterior and wood stacked against garage wall. Common attic between garage and house allowed fire to spread throughout attic space. Insurance reps were on scene when we arrived, and Derald suggested they bring in a private due to potential litigation issues. Insurance agreed, and Glenn and Gwen Johnson were contacted. A joint investigation was conducted, with the cause determined to be a faulting outlet in the garage. Although there was some questionable installation methods used with the Christmas lights, they were ruled out as a cause, and there was no fault associated with the installation.

Joe investigated a fire, Glenn brought in also. House was being painted, painters were heavy smokers, and it was determined the fire started in the basement due to a misplaced cigarette.

New 921 books were passed out to: Selah, Kittitas FMO, KVFR, and Wapato. Remaining books will be at the next meeting. No 921's on disk were ordered, it is a PDF file that is downloaded, requires a credit card to initiate.

**NEXT MEETING TO BE HELD DECEMBER
16TH AT THE SELAH FIRE DEPARTMENT**

HAPPY HOLIDAYS