

January 2008

TO: The Board of Fire Commissioners

Dear Commissioners:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of some of the benefits of membership in the Washington Fire Commissioners Association. If you have any questions, please call the state association office at 1-800-491-WFCA(9322) or (360) 943-3880.

Some WFCA membership benefits are:

1. Legislative representation for all districts; the Legislature enacts all laws under which we are governed and the association provides full time legislative liaison representation so that fire districts receive consideration;
2. The WFCA is a recognized fire service source of administrative education for districts. Our annual seminar series offers many important subjects including: interpretation of laws pertaining to fire districts, responsibilities and duties of commissioners, authority granted to the board, available funding, conduct of board meetings, responsibilities to employees (whether volunteer or not) and other subjects vital to the successful operation of a fire district. Tuition assistance is available to districts with budget limitations;
3. An annual conference which includes classroom seminars and time for a relaxed interchange of ideas;
4. Broad health care and dental contract coverage is available to qualified personnel of member fire districts. (Note: Commissioners electing to participate in the medical/dental program must pay their own premium);
5. The newsletter *Fireline* which updates current activities within the fire service as well as providing information on available used equipment;
6. *Fire District Lawbook* – RCW 52 and other statutes that pertain to fire protection districts – one copy is provided to each member district;
7. *Fire Service Directory* – an annual joint publication of the WFCA and the Washington Fire Chiefs which provides information concerning the fire service in the state, including the address and telephone number of departments, districts, commissioners, chiefs and secretaries – one copy is provided to each commissioner, secretary and chief;
8. Wage and benefit updates – a compilation of data including wages, reimbursements, hours, benefits, etc. – one copy provided to each participating district, upon request;
9. An annual legislative day which gives members the opportunity to discuss fire service issues with their local legislators;
10. Pamphlets and helps list (see attached);
11. Notification to fire districts of county and regional association meetings and workshops;
12. A website featuring items of interest to the fire service, classified ads, a calendar of events and links to websites of other pertinent organizations, agencies and districts (visit [www.wfca.wa.gov](http://www.wfca.wa.gov));
13. Research and liaison services with state, local governments and other authorities;

14. Telephone and written responses to specific questions concerning fire district operations;
15. Research and consultation with the providers of all forms of insurance in order to help fire districts obtain adequate health care contracts and general liability protection;
16. In cooperation with the Association of Washington Cities, long-term care insurance coverage for LEOFF 1 employees;
17. Staff attends many county and regional association meetings to provide updates on current activities of the fire service as well as one on one discussions of local problems and programs;
18. Staff meetings with individual districts (upon request);
19. WFCA Board members attend regional and county association meetings for firsthand response and input for the betterment of the association;
20. Staff serves as a liaison with the state auditor for specific follow-up and help on audits;
21. Election help: lid lifts, bonds, special levy and benefit charge information;
22. Extensive negotiations, on an ongoing basis, to preserve fire district funding authority and capacity.

Approximately 88 percent of the fire districts are active participating members in the Washington Fire Commissioners Association. These district commissioners, and other personnel, freely give of their own time and resources to help others. At our annual conference we see an exchange of ideas between district officials which helps provide better service to their communities. An association cannot do everything for its members; it can only serve as a focal point and central agency for an exchange of ideas with its primary function as a service organization for the membership.

The Board urges all of you to help the association, through your input and participation, to better serve fire districts in the state of Washington.

If you would like to ask a question about the WFCA please call any of us:

Joe Dawson, President (Spokane Valley Fire Dept.)	(509) 924-2619
Bill Gates, Vice President (South King Fire & Rescue)	(253) 927-6482
Les Riel, Secretary-Treasurer (Yakima 4)	(509) 248-1190
Sharon Colby, Region 1 (Spokane 3)	(509) 448-1677
Emilio Buttice, Region 2 (Walla Walla 4)	(509) 529-1509
Dennis Bjork, Region 3 (Grant 5)	(509) 765-3175
Ken Eakin, Region 4 (Yakima 12)	(509) 966-4758
Steve Lich, Region 5 (Camano Island Fire & Rescue)	(360) 387-7432
Mark Thompson, Region 6 (South King Fire & Rescue)	(253) 838-6537
Robert Skaggs, Region 7 (Graham Fire & Rescue)	(253) 848-8599
Keith Merritt, Region 8 (Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue)	(360) 423-7128
Mick McKinley, Region 9 (Central Kitsap Fire & Rescue)	(360) 473-5382
Roger Ferris, WFCA Executive Secretary	(360) 943-3880/1-800-491-WFCA(9322)

Enclosures: WFCA Pamphlets & Helps