



Summer Newsletter 2025



Update from the Chief

As I sit at my desk wondering what to write about, a bunch of things come to mind. We have replaced one of our worn-out fire engines and we have another one on order. We did not buy all the bells and whistles, but we did make sure that they would work for the next couple of decades. It is replacing an engine that is 30 years old. The first engine is pump and roll (water can be pumped while driving), with some in cab fire controls. This means on the days where only one or two people are available, they can still fight a lot of fire. The second one will be here in about a year. Like anything, timelines must be flexible.



We are getting ready to send another group of volunteers through the Mason County Fire Academy that is paid for by the state. I'm proud of the fact that this free academy was brought here by Deputy Chief Greg Seals, myself, and our former training chief. It's been eight years since that very first academy, and we have trained well over 100 volunteers. Our paid staff are working with the volunteers to cover all our calls and basic life support transports. This provides a less expensive alternative to our residents over Central Mason. We also get to keep the transport dollars in West Mason. It is a win-win for the entire community.

This year's wildland season is shaping up to be a warm one. Many of our volunteers are excited to go out to other parts of the state and fight fires. This is another win-win for our community. These firefighters not only get to make some money, but they bring great experience and the ability to fight fires back home. This is essentially free training and it's training there is no other way to get.

Lastly, I will thank everyone in advance for supporting your local volunteers on August 5th. Proposition 1 is on the ballot. This measure is a lid lift to restore the previously approved tax rate to \$1.30 per \$1,000 property tax. This is not a new tax, this is a reset. We are not asking for as much as most of the districts because we don't need to. West Mason prides itself on being as frugal as possible while still meeting the needs of the community and volunteers, while other fire districts ask for the maximum allowed and then write the budget. We wrote a budget and figured out what we needed. This is the right thing to do.

Thank you again for the continued support and as usual, the coffee is hot, and I love to chat. So, stop by.

Matthew N Welander
Fire Chief, West Mason Fire

Wildland Class

We just finished up a 4-week wildland class, just in time for wildland season. There were 28 students, 3 from West Mason. Some of the students also assisted through the state mobilization program on the Red Bridge Fire and the Vansycle Canyon Fire. We also have equipment operators for brush cleanup waiting to go.



Big Win for West Mason: \$515,000 Secured for Station Modernization

Thanks to the strong support of Senator Drew MacEwen, Representative Dan Griffey, and Representative Travis Couture, West Mason Fire has secured \$515,000 in

Washington State capital budget funds to modernize our aging headquarters station, located on Dayton Airport Road in the heart of the district.

This investment represents a critical step forward for the district, which has long operated from a facility struggling to keep pace with modern operational demands. With rising call volumes, growing staffing needs, and an increasing reliance on advanced equipment and technology, the station's limitations have become more than just inconvenient—they've become an obstacle to efficiency and safety.

This isn't just about walls and roofs. This is about making sure our crews have what they need to serve the public effectively. We're grateful for the support of our legislative delegation, who clearly recognize the importance of public safety infrastructure. The modernization project at our Dayton Airport Road location will tackle long-overdue upgrades including: improved crew quarters, safer apparatus bays, space for essential training, and administrative operations.

These improvements will support day-to-day functions and also position the district for long-term growth. Allowing it to meet the evolving needs of our West Mason community.

Construction planning is underway, with updates to be shared as the project progresses. The district remains committed to transparency and public engagement throughout the process.

This funding is a clear example of what's possible when local leadership and state representatives work together in support of public safety.

Best regards,
Commissioner Trevor Severance
Chairman



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