

House Calls



NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 9

WINTER 2026



FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

A New Era of Emergency Healthcare for Fire District 9

Spokane County Fire District 9 is on the verge of a major milestone: providing affordable, accessible, and high-quality emergency healthcare to our community on or before July 1st. This achievement reflects a bold step forward in ensuring that every resident can rely on timely, accessible, professional emergency ambulance transport service medical care, now and for generations to come.

We are driven every day by a clear purpose: to provide our community with the highest-quality emergency services that are affordable and accessible to all. We deeply value the investments you make in Fire District 9, and

we recognize that it is our responsibility to ensure you receive a strong return on those life-and property-saving investments. The launch of our District 9 ambulance transport service represents only the beginning. There is much more to come as we continue to build, improve, and invest in emergency services for our community.

Planning for ambulance transport began more than six months ago, and we are proud to share that we have delivered ahead of schedule on every major deadline. Hiring is now complete, and our 21 recruits are set to begin a rigorous 15-week academy on March 2. By the time this edition of the newsletter reaches your mailbox, our new ambulances will have been delivered, and our policies and procedures will be finalized. We are well prepared for full implementation in early spring. Establishing our own ambulance transport

CONTINUED >>>



MATTHEW T. VINCI
FIRE CHIEF

FREE Heartsaver First Aid/ CPR Classes

for Spokane County Fire District 9 Citizens & Businesses

For information:
509-466-4602
scfd9.org.



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Fire District 9



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www.SCFD9.org
509-466-4602

If you are a Fire District 9 resident and are transported by a Fire District 9 ambulance, you will **NOT** receive a bill for ambulance transport.

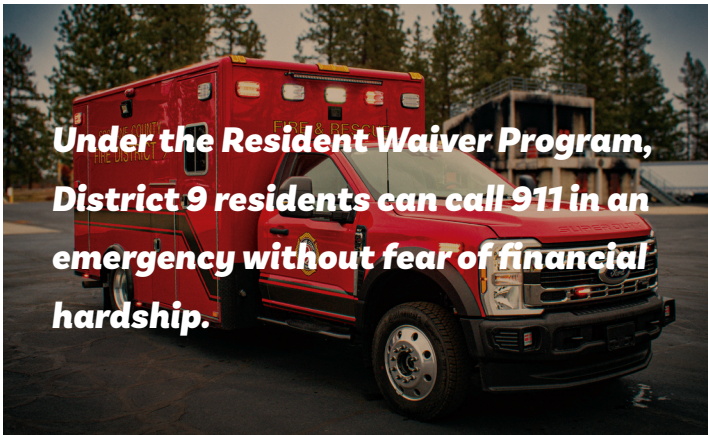


CONTINUED | **FROM THE FIRE CHIEF**

service is a cornerstone of our vision to best serve our residents, businesses, and visitors.


Resident Waiver Program

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU: A key benefit of Fire District 9 providing its own ambulance transport service is the creation of a Resident Waiver Program, designed to protect our community from unexpected and overwhelming medical bills. **If you are a Fire District 9 resident and are transported by a Fire District 9 ambulance, you will not receive a bill for ambulance transport.** Fire District 9 will bill your insurance directly and will not bill you for any remaining balance owed after insurance pays.



This represents a stark contrast to the existing system. In many cases today, the current ambulance provider is out-of-network, leaving residents responsible for the remaining balance of transport fees that can exceed \$5,000. Under the Resident Waiver Program, District 9 residents can call 911 in an emergency without fear of financial hardship.

This is not only a major milestone for Fire District 9, but also across Spokane County. The need for change was clear. The current provider increased base transport rates by 126% in a single year while failing to meet the minimum response time standards required by state law. That trajectory was not sustainable.

The time is now to ensure a long-term solution for emergency transport services, one that is dependable, accountable, and affordable. This effort is about protecting access to emergency healthcare that you, your children, and their children can count on. Fire District 9 is proud to take this step forward with and for our community. 

2025



8,964
CALLS
FOR
EMERGENCY
SERVICES

78%
EMS CALLS



388
FIRE
RELATED
CALLS

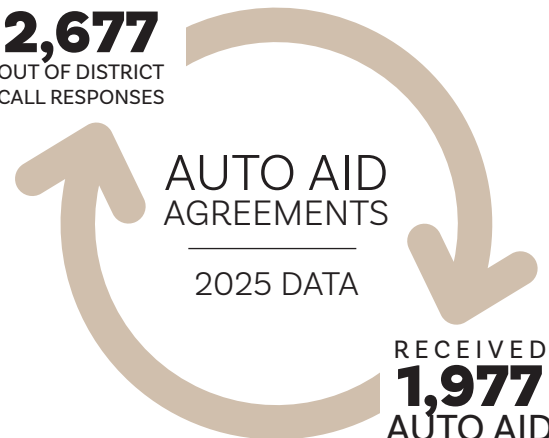


2,677
OUT OF DISTRICT
CALL RESPONSES

AUTO AID
AGREEMENTS

2025 DATA

RECEIVED
1,977
AUTO AID
CALL RESPONSES



Understanding Fire District 9 Operations: EMS Responses & Call Volume

As we continue to discuss how your fire district operates, it might be helpful to describe the types of emergencies that we respond to across the 125 square miles of Fire District 9. Over the past two years we have averaged 8,964 emergency response calls per year. Of those calls, 78% are Emergency Medical Service (EMS) calls.

All 911 calls are triaged by Spokane Regional Emergency Communications (SREC) and then dispatched to the stations. Medical calls are categorized into five different levels of patient severity, ranging from lower-acuity incidents such as lift assists for fallen patients to critical emergencies like heart attacks or strokes. These calls may also consist of motor vehicle accidents or technical rescues.

In addition to medical calls, the district responded to 388 fire related calls last year. These incidents range from structure fires or wildland fires to motor vehicle fires. While these are not the only types of calls we respond to, EMS responses make up the majority of our emergency calls.

Fire District 9 also participates in mutual response agreements with neighboring agencies, known as "auto aid agreements." When our apparatus is the closest available to those in need, we assist our neighboring fire departments. Last year we responded roughly to 2,650

calls outside our district to help other citizens in need. In return we received auto aid from neighboring agencies into our fire district on roughly 1,900 calls.

In addition to our standard engine and ladder companies we maintain highly trained personnel that are part of our Special Operations Teams, which responds to rope

"We are committed to maintaining high standards in response times, training, safety, equipment, and facilities."

rescues, trench rescues, confined space incidents, and urban search and rescue events. We also deploy Rescue Task Force (RTF) members who respond with law enforcement to render aid to victims in a mass casualty incident.


Our prevention department oversees our Fire Investigators and helps with public education with an emphasis on risk reduction, wildfire preparedness and fire code planning.

Beginning this July, we will launch emergency medical transport to the citizens of Fire District 9. While this will increase our overall response activity, it will significantly enhance service delivery by providing ambulance transport with no out-of-pocket cost to district residents. Please read the Fire Chief's column in this month's House Calls for additional details on this exciting program.



Since being elected to the Board of Commissioners in late 2021, we have seen an increase in call volume every year. As part of our strategic planning efforts, our main goal is to ensure that Fire District 9 can continue to meet this growth and provide high quality timely emergency services to our district. We have to have appropriate staffing, apparatus, and facilities to meet the growing demands of our district. It is a priority of our Board that we recruit quality people to train and serve the public.

We are committed to maintaining high standards in response times, training, safety, equipment, and facilities. Our goal is to be among the top fire departments in the State of Washington and to ensure our firefighters, EMTs, and paramedics have the tools and resources they need to perform at their best when serving our community.

In our next article we will discuss deployment models. Which fire apparatus do we send to certain calls and why there are a certain number of firefighters on that apparatus. We will also explain National Standards, and how they influence our decision-making, how long fire apparatus typically remain in service, and why ageing equipment must be replaced even when it is still operational. 



House Calls

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Spokane County Fire District 9

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James E. Bennett, Commissioner
Brian A. Mather, Commissioner
Matthew T. Vinci, Fire Chief



PLANNING TOGETHER: Community Input at the Heart of Our Future

We are entering an exciting new phase at Fire District 9 as we emerge into a community-driven strategic planning process, one that puts the voices of the people we serve at the center of developing our future. This effort is about listening, learning, and working together to shape a shared vision that reflects the needs and aspirations of our community.

In the coming weeks, we look forward to gathering meaningful input during two upcoming meetings: March 20 with our Business Community and March 21 with our District 9 residents. These conversations are an essential part of the process, giving us the opportunity to hear directly from those who live, work, and invest here. Your perspectives will help guide priorities, identify challenges, and uncover opportunities for growth and improvement.

Our future depends on your input. By engaging in this process, you help ensure that our plans meet the needs of our residents, support our businesses, and enhance the experience of our visitors. We encourage you to join us, share your ideas, and be part of shaping a strong, inclusive, and forward-looking future for our community.



Join Us for Strategic Planning

Community Engagement Events

We invite District 9 community members and business owners to engage in our strategic planning efforts. Your input is vital to shaping the future of our programs and services for everyone.



Two Opportunities to Participate

BUSINESSES
Fri., March, 20th @ 10am
Station 91 - 616 W. Hastings Rd.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS
Sat., March 21st @ 10am
Station 91 - 616 W. Hastings Rd.

For more information, please contact us at:
509-466-4602