

San Juan Island Fire Department

Informational Manual for Volunteers



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Mission

The fire service in America has a long and proud tradition. San Juan Island Fire Department continues that tradition by protecting the lives and property of the community.

San Juan Island Fire Department Mission Statement

To protect life and property

- ❖ **Providing our members with a safe working environment.**
- ❖ **Educating our residents.**
- ❖ **Identifying and mitigating fire hazards.**
- ❖ **Responding to fire, rescue and hazardous materials incidents.**
- ❖ **Responding to natural and man-made disasters.**

We will provide these services by working in partnership with cooperating agencies; by providing innovative and cost-effective operations; and by supporting our personnel and the community.

History of the Department

The State of Washington chartered San Juan Island Fire Department (aka. San Juan County Fire Protection District #3) in May of 1957. In the early days, the fire district contracted with the town of Friday Harbor to provide fire protection. Starting in the 1970s local neighborhood groups built fire stations around the island, including Cape San Juan, Little Mountain, Sunset Point, Roche Harbor and Limestone Point. A variety of older fire engines were housed at the stations. Eventually, Little Mountain and Sunset Point stations were remodeled and enlarged, Roche Harbor was moved and Limestone Point Station closed. A fire station was added at Miller Road in the late 1980s.

In 1986 the department purchased 5 new fire engines. This purchase brought increased capability and reliability to the department. Over the next few years equipment was standardized, and a common training program established. Since 1986, the department has continued to improve its apparatus and equipment. Currently the department staffs one heavy rescue vehicle, two water tenders, one carrying 2000 gallons and the other 2500 gallons, two specially designed wildland / urban interface engines, five structural firefighting engines, three smaller wildland engines and one intermediate engine. These are stationed at seven stations around the district.

In 2001 the department opened its headquarters station that includes meeting and classroom spaces, exercise equipment and locker rooms for firefighter's use, a day room and bunk rooms for the sleeper / resident program, maintenance shop, and administrative offices.

We respond to an average of 190 calls per year. Of these approximately 20% are fire calls, of the fire calls 45% are wildland fires and 30% are structure fires. In addition to the fire responses 18% of our calls are rescue responses, 38% are smoke investigations and 15% are false alarms.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants for firefighting positions must have a high school diploma or equivalent, be over the age of 18, and be in good physical condition. Cadet program applicants must be over the age of 16 years. Applicants may be excluded for criminal behavior that might interfere with the department's mission.

Acceptance into the department is contingent on successful completion of International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) Firefighter 1 testing which is incorporated in the recruit class, or National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Firefighter 2 certification which is incorporated in the wildland firefighting class. Candidates who have previous experience may have the requirement for training waived, if the training meets the requirements of the department. The Training Officer makes the final determination on equivalence.

How to Join

- Complete a department application and return it to the fire department headquarters.
- The department will run a background check and request any records from other fire departments, if applicable.
- The Assistant Chief and the Station Officer will interview the candidate, and make a hiring recommendation to the Fire Chief.
- Final approval of all candidates is made by the Fire District Commissioners.
- Once a candidate is accepted, he or she must pass a physical exam that is paid for by the department.

Initial Training

All new members must successfully complete training and certification in wildland firefighting or structural firefighting or complete support volunteer training. The training classes are offered at least once each year.

Wildland Firefighting

All members who wish to fight wildland fires must complete the annual wildland firefighter school. This nationally recognized class is 40 hours long, and is offered over two weekends in June. The class covers fire behavior, fire weather, fireline construction, tools and water use, and other subjects. It is designed to allow a firefighter to work as a member of a hand crew or engine crew. Upon successful completion of the class the firefighter is nationally certified as a Wildland Firefighter II.

In some years nearly one half of the department's fire calls are for wildland fires. Most occur between June and October. A majority of department members train to fight both wildland and structure fires.

Structural Firefighting

The Firefighter I (structural firefighting) class is approximately 230 hours long. There is an introductory meeting on the first Wednesday after Labor Day. Classes are scheduled for Saturdays and Sundays continuing through the final certification examination in mid-December. The instruction includes fire behavior, self-contained breathing apparatus, laddering and hose evolutions, forcible entry and ventilation. Included in the Firefighter I class is the WA State approved hazardous materials operations course. The class travels to the WA State Fire Academy for live fire exercises. The course culminates with the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) Firefighter I, Hazmat Awareness and Hazmat Operations certification exams.

Members who complete only the Structural firefighting class are eligible to respond to all types of incidents; however, they cannot fight wildland fires without completing that class as well. Firefighters are also required to earn and maintain certification in first aid, Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) use and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

Lateral Transfer Membership

Lateral applicants may be accepted as responding members if they have achieved documented NWCG WFF2 and/or IFSAC FF1 certification.

Lateral applicants that have been active as firefighters since 2002, but have not completed formal certification may also be accepted as responding members.

Lateral applicants accepted as responding members will complete a six-month probationary period.

Lateral applicants that have some training or experience, but do not meet either of the two preceding requirements may join the department on probationary status, and must complete NWCG WFF2 and / or IFSAC FF1 certification as soon as possible; but within a six-month probationary period.

During the six-month probationary period non-certified lateral applicants may only participate in a response at the discretion of the incident commander.



Benefits

Perhaps the greatest benefit to being a member of the fire department is the chance to work with the best people in the community. Pride and the chance to serve the community are also benefits of being a member. The department provides more tangible benefits as well.

Pay

Firefighters are formally classified as paid on call employees of the department. Because firefighters are paid for training, for response, and for various other duties they perform for the department they are legally classified as “paid on call”. Firefighters receive \$15.00 per hour for call response. Officers and firefighters with advanced training or certification receive an additional amount. The department pays a minimum of one hour for each response. All responses over one hour are rounded up to the nearest quarter-hour.

The department pays \$10.00 per hour for training, regular equipment checks and other routine duties. Routine duties may include station maintenance and cleaning, public education and inspections. Attendance at commissioner meetings, travel to and from training, and certain other activities are not considered routine duties.

Additional hourly incentives of .50 per hour are paid for members with advanced certification such as IFSAC Firefighter 1 and IFSAC Firefighter II. Lieutenants receive an additional \$5.00 per hour and Captains \$6.00 per hour. The department pays quarterly. Each firefighter receives a statement of activity along with their check.

Unit Logs

Training, response and routine duties are recorded on a Unit Log. Each member is responsible for ensuring that they have their time accurately recorded on the unit log. Unit logs will be kept in the stations until the first Monday of the month following the activity. The unit logs are then collected and recorded.

Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP)

All volunteer firefighters are automatically enrolled in the department's LOSAP after one year of service. This program rewards members for staying on with the department. The amount of reward is based on the number of years of service. A member who stays with the department for two years would receive about \$92. A member who stays for twenty years would accumulate about \$9,000. Each member receives an annual statement of his or her accrual. Members can withdraw their award at any time.

Disability and Medical Insurance

All volunteer firefighters are covered by the Board for Volunteer Firefighter's Relief Fund. This is a state sponsored program that covers medical expenses, disability and death, for any accidents that occur while volunteering. The program pays for all medical expenses. Up to \$2,550 disability per month is provided. The line-of-duty death benefit is \$152,000, plus survivor benefits of up to \$2,550 per month. In addition, the Federal government provides line-of-duty death coverage.

Hometown Heros

The Bureau of Justice Public Safety Officer's Benefit Program provides disability benefits, education benefits to family of survivors, and line of duty death benefits of up to \$303,000.

Fitness Facilities

A full range of fitness equipment is provided for firefighters' use at the Mullis St. station. Treadmill, elliptical trainer, universal and free weights are available. Men's and women's locker rooms make for convenient use of the facilities. Members are also paid for up to three hours per week of fitness training.

BVFF Pension

The Board for Volunteer Firefighter's Pension Fund is a state sponsored pension based on length of service as a volunteer. All volunteer firefighters that participate in 10% or twenty hours of drills per year and respond to 10%, or a minimum of 24 of the calls per year are eligible. The department makes a \$30.00 per year contribution for each member. The member must make a matching contribution and meet the participation requirements to receive credit for each year of service. A firefighter who served twenty-five years would be eligible for up to \$300.00 per month at age sixty-five.

Gasoline discount

All department members are eligible for a \$0.07 per gallon discount on gasoline from Petro San Juan.

Airlift Northwest Air Care Insurance

All department members are eligible for reimbursement of Airlift membership fees. Once you have purchased the insurance, provide you membership documentation to the department for 100% reimbursement.

WA State Deferred Compensation Program

All department members may participate in the WA State Deferred Compensation Program. All or part of each member's pay may be directed to a tax deferred investment pool. Details on the program may be found at <https://dcp.csplans.com/portal/PortalLogin.jsp>

Organizational Structure

Stations

All firefighters are assigned to one of the eight stations. The firefighters may be assigned to a particular engine or other apparatus or work directly for the station lieutenant(s). The station lieutenant oversees all activities of the station. Three Captains oversee groups of stations, those on the southern portion of the island, the central portion including Brown Island, and the northern portion.

- Firefighters are responsible for being prepared for emergencies, responding and performing assigned duties.
- Lieutenants are responsible for ensuring that the apparatus are ready to respond and supervising the firefighters during training and routine duties, in addition to the responsibilities of being a firefighter.
- Captains are responsible for ensuring that all personnel assigned to their stations are trained and ready to respond. They supervise the lieutenants in addition to the responsibilities of being a firefighter.

Administration

Board of Fire Commissioners

The residents of the fire district elect fire district board of commissioners. The fire commissioners are responsible for setting policy, determining taxation and finances and overseeing the actions of the department. They serve as a board of directors for the department.

Career Staff

The fire chief supervises all activities of the department. The administrative assistant serves as the department secretary and receptionist. In addition, the administrative assistant handles all payroll, bookkeeping and data entry.

- The Fire Chief is responsible for managing the department. This includes long-range and short-range planning, implementing policy, developing procedures and guidelines, coordinating with assisting agencies, budgeting, staffing, and ensuring adequate

preparedness at the department level. The fire chief is the final authority on operational issues and command and control of emergencies.

- The Assistant Chief / Training Officer is responsible for managing the department's training programs, including planning, program development, instruction and evaluation. The assistant chief / training officer is second in command of the department. The Assistant Chief is also the department Safety Officer.
- The Maintenance Division coordinates maintenance on all apparatus and facilities. In addition, the Maintenance Supervisor purchases and tracks equipment and supplies and performs the duties of a station lieutenant. The maintenance supervisor is assisted by additional team members.

Policy and Procedures

The board of fire commissioners enacts policy. Copies of the policy manual are available in the department library.

The fire chief develops operational guidelines. These are published in a manual as the Standard Operating Guidelines. The SOGs are constantly being updated. Periodically, the department prints complete revisions of the SOG manual for each member to ensure that all members are kept up to date.

This information packet is based on the policy and procedures of the department. It is not intended to replace the policy manual or the SOG manual. Please refer to the policy manual or the SOG manual if you have specific questions.

Requirements to Maintain Membership in Good Standing

Structural Firefighters

Each structural firefighter must meet the following requirements to stay active:

- Maintain a current first aid and CPR certification.
- Attend 12 hours of basic skills training per calendar quarter.
- Train on SCBA use quarterly.
- Pass an SCBA fit test annually.
- Train on hazardous materials response annually.
- Complete a class on infection control annually.
- Pass a physical fitness test annually.
- Pass the department physical examination on the schedule determined by the department.

Wildland Firefighters

Wildland firefighters must meet the following requirements to stay active:

- Pass a physical fitness test annually.
- Attend 10 hours of training per year.
- Complete annual safety refresher including fire shelter use.
- Maintain a current first aid and CPR certification.

- Pass the department physical examination on the schedule determined by the department.
- Maintain current “red card” certification.

Inactivity and Leave of Absence

When members do not meet the regular requirements to stay active, they are placed on the inactive roster. Inactive members cannot respond to emergencies until cleared by the training officer. Members who are inactive two of any four quarters may be removed from the department.

When a member expects to be inactive, he or she may request a leave of absence. The training officer must clear returning members to return to active duty. The training policy outlines the procedural requirements.

Uniforms and Equipment

The department provides tee shirts, uniform shirts with collar brass, badge and name bar. New department members are issued “Probationary” name bars for the first year of membership. The department also issued a department jacket. Jackets and uniforms remain the property of the department.

Wildland Firefighters

Firefighters are issued gear when they join the department. Wildland firefighters are issued the following gear:



- Leather boots (or credit of up to \$150.00 towards purchase)
- Nomex pants and shirt
- Gloves
- Hardhat with shroud
- Goggles
- Web belt, and fire shelter
- Headlamp
- Ear plugs
- Pager or radio, charger and spare batteries

Structural Firefighters

Structural firefighters are issued the following gear:

- Rubber boots

- Turnout coat and pants
- Gloves
- Helmet with shroud
- Flash hood
- Safety Glasses
- Flashlight, hose strap, door wedges, folding spanner wrench, personal rope
- Ear plugs
- SCBA face piece
- Pager or radio, charger and spare batteries

You may elect to carry your gear in your car or to keep it at your station.

Responding to Calls

Radios

Each firefighter is issued a radio or pager. Please use only the rechargeable batteries issued with the equipment.

If you lose your radio, contact the duty officer as soon as possible. If it has been misplaced somewhere nearby, we can have Dispatch activate the alert tones to help in locating it.

Alert tones are activated by the County Sheriff's Dispatch. Our radios programming includes our own two frequencies as well as those of the Friday Harbor Fire Department, Lopez and Shaw Fire Departments, San Juan Island EMS and other agencies with whom we work. Complete radio operation instructions may be found under the Communications link at www.sjfire.org



When to Respond

When an alert tone is received, listen to the page. The dispatcher will state the address of the incident, the nature of the call and the station area in which the address is located. If you are assigned to, or are in or near the station area given, you should respond.

If you are close to the station, respond with the apparatus. If you are close to the incident, and there are others already responding with the apparatus, you may respond directly to the scene. Members should try to respond with the apparatus whenever possible. For automatic aid calls to Friday Harbor only fully staffed engines should respond when requested.

Some pages request additional personnel only, or rescue team personnel, or they request personnel for off-island responses. Staging locations or reporting procedures will usually be given.

Do not respond if you have consumed alcohol or are using any drugs or medications that may impair your ability to perform the job. If you are ill or not physically well enough to fight fire, stay home.

Shift Coverage Program

Paid on call firefighters that are scheduled to cover shifts (07:00 until 19:00) or night shifts (19:00 until 07:00) at the headquarters station are paid \$25.00 per shift. Newly certified IFSAC Firefighter 1 members are required to cover a minimum of 2 shifts per month.

Maps

The department has produced detailed maps of the island. All members are issued one copy and should keep it in their vehicle.

Privately Owned Vehicles (POV)

When responding to a call in a personal vehicle you are required to obey all of the traffic laws of Washington State. This includes maintaining a valid license and appropriate insurance. Members are not allowed to exceed the posted speed limit or to pass in no-passing zones. Law enforcement officers will cite anyone who disobeys the traffic laws.

Members are issued a bumper sticker identifying them as members of the department. The sticker goes on the front left bumper. It does not identify yours as an emergency response vehicle, or force vehicles to move aside for you. It is used to identify you as a department member when arriving on scene. If you leave the department, you are required to remove it.

Take the time to consult your map book and know where you are going, clear your windshield if there is frost on it, and make sure that you are ready to safely respond.

Driving Department Vehicles

The Emergency Vehicle Accident Prevention (EVAP) course is required before operating any department vehicle. The course is approximately 16 hours in length. After completing the course, the member may drive department vehicles code yellow (no lights or siren), under the supervision of a certified driver. The member must then pass a driving test, given by the department, in order to drive code red. Each driver must retake the written and driving tests every four years.

If you are the first to arrive at the station when responding to a call, pull the apparatus out onto the apron in front of the station, and announce that you are “awaiting one”. If no other members arrive within one minute, you may respond code yellow.

Continuing Training

The department offers a number of training classes and programs. Some of those programs are listed here:

Driver / Operator

This certification is comprised of driving skills and pump operation skills.

Driving

Driver training is required before any member can operate any department vehicle. The class, which is called EVAP (Emergency Vehicle Accident Prevention), is two days in length. The class includes one day of class instruction and one day of driving instruction. Each candidate must also pass a “road test” after completing the class.

Members must be 18 years of age, and have a current driver’s license with a clean driving record to be eligible to drive.



Pump Operations

Prior to operating any engine mounted pump, the member must complete a course in pump operations, or demonstrate the ability to pass the pump operations skills test for that apparatus.

The pump operations training program is divided into five parts:

Pump Theory: Basic pump types and hydraulic calculations

Dash Pump Operations: This class covers the basic operation of Type 1 engines, including preconnect operations, working from the booster tank, drafting, multiple hose line operations, supply engine pumping, and master stream operations

Hawk Pump Operations: Compressed Air Foam. This class covers the basic operation of a type 2 engine, including the decision to use, and the creation and application of compressed air foam.

Tender Operations: Tender operations. This class covers nurse mode supply and water shuttle operations.

Wildland Pump Operations: Brush truck operations. This class covers the use of Type 6 engines and other Wildland pumps.

Firefighter 2

Upon receipt of IFSAC Firefighter 1 certification members may begin working towards Firefighter 2 recognition.

Of particular importance in the Firefighter 2 curriculum is that portion that addresses heavy rescue and vehicle disentanglement. This presents the basic skills necessary to participate as a member of the department's heavy rescue crew. Team members train monthly. All team members must attend no less than eight hours of heavy rescue training annually to maintain certification. Members must complete the Firefighter 2 course prior to operating any heavy hydraulic equipment or specialized rescue equipment.



Hazardous Materials

Each structural firefighter will complete a hazardous materials awareness level class and certification and a hazardous materials operations level class and certification. Additional HazMat training, including Technician and Incident Commander, is offered by, and available through, the state.



First Aid/CPR/Automatic External Defibrillation (AED)

The department requires First Aid and CPR classes. They are scheduled quarterly. Certification is valid for 2 years after completing the class. An AED is a device used to restore a heartbeat to a person in some types of cardiac arrest. The department has AEDs at several stations and on Rescue 314. Department members are trained in the American Heart Assoc. cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and foreign body airway obstruction treatment.

Officer Training

There are a variety of classes that help prepare a candidate for becoming a company officer. The mandatory classes include

1. San Juan County Firefighter Recruit Class or equivalent. (Firefighter I certification recommended)
2. Emergency Vehicle Accident Prevention
3. NWCG S130/S190 Wildland Firefighter 2.
4. First Aid and CPR
5. NWCG I300 Intermediate ICS or equivalent.

The recommended classes include:

1. Washington State Instructor 1
2. NWCG S-131 Advanced Firefighter/Squad Boss
3. Managing Company Tactical Operations: Preparation, Decision Making, and Tactics.
4. NFA Volunteer Incentive Program- Fire Command Operations.
5. Hazardous Materials-Incident Command.
6. NFA Incident Safety Officer.
7. NFA Arson Detection for the First Responder or
8. NFA Fire Cause Determination for Company Officers



Washington State
Fire Training & Safety Officers
A Division of Washington State Association of Fire Chiefs

Other Training

Many classes and conferences are offered through out the state, the region, and at the National Fire Academy in Emmetsburg Maryland. Firefighters and officers are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities to learn both in the classroom and from members of the fire service outside the island. The department will usually pay all expenses. Members need to get approval from the training officer prior to signing up for these classes.

Tuition The department pays tuition directly. The only exception is for college classes. Each member is eligible to receive up to \$600.00 per year for fire science college classes, after successfully completing the class with a grade of C (2.0) or better.

Travel Costs The department will pay for normal travel costs, including ferry tickets. Mileage is reimbursed at the current federal government rate cents per mile. Whenever possible, the department provides a vehicle for travel to training events. Please confirm reimburse arrangements in advance of incurring any expenditure.

Per Diem The department pays for meals per diem, based on each meal. The department may provide meals directly, rather than pay per diem.

Housing The department will provide housing when necessary.

The training officer or the administrative assistant will assist with making the arrangements for off-island classes.



Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency

U.S. Fire Administration
Working for a Fire Safe America

Funding

Most of the District's budget is derived from property taxes. We also contract to provide fire protection to various state agencies, including Washington State Parks, the University of Washington and the Department of Natural Resources.

Firefighter's Association

The Firefighters Association is a non-profit organization comprised of all active paid-on-call, support, and career members of District 3. The purposes of the organization are to aid in the promotion of the Fire District and its services, to support its members and members of the

community who are victims of fire, disaster, or loss, and to encourage and stimulate fellowship within the organization.

The association undertakes projects during the year to help raise funds, to promote social interaction, to reward its members for their service, to support community endeavors, and to organize the department's annual banquet. A seven member council, elected at-large, oversees weekly operation of the association which holds regular membership business meetings once a month as part of All-Department drill.

Funds that support the organization come from fundraising, grants, and public donations.

Disaster Preparedness and Response

The department encourages all members to be prepared for disasters. Each member should keep enough food, water, clothing and other essentials to be self-sufficient for a minimum of three days. The American Red Cross provides additional information about remaining self-sufficient. Copies of their materials are available from the fire district office.

Each member should keep a travel bag with three days worth of clothing and essentials in the event that a major incident or disaster strikes this community or another community within the region. The department is committed to assisting other communities when disaster strikes, and may ask members to respond on extended incidents.

The department maintains disaster supplies at all of the fire stations as well. These supplies are intended to keep our members functioning for 72 hours while on incidents.

Leaving the Department

When a member leaves the department for any reason, he or she should notify the fire chief. The chief will conduct a brief "exit interview" to try to help identify how the department can better retain members. The administrative assistant will prepare the paperwork necessary for separation. This includes payment of LOSAP funds and any pay due, and termination of some benefits. The administrative assistant will explain the procedures. All members must return all issued personal protective equipment and department identification. Department bumper stickers should be removed from personal vehicles.