

# Elsie Vinemaple Fire District

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## GENEROUS DONATION EXPANDS ELSIE FLEET



Visit Our Website!  
[elsie-fire.com](http://elsie-fire.com)  
 Or scan the QR code below with your phone



Our website features the latest news, pics and videos of trainings, meeting minutes and agendas, volunteer information, and more! Check it out, and sign up for our mailing list to get updates delivered directly to your inbox!

Your Elsie-Vinemaple Fire District is the proud new owner of a Wildland Urban Interface Engine, purchased by a benevolent supporter of our District. Also known as a Type III engine, this versatile apparatus features an International four-wheel drive chassis that increases our mobility in severe weather. It carries 500 gallons of water and can pump 500 gallons per minute, making it effective for both wildland and structure fires.

"This heavy brush rig is a great addition to our fleet," said Chief Rob Davis. "It has the ability to 'pump and roll,' meaning it can pump while stationary or on the move, pumping water 5 times faster than our current brush rigs. With that capacity, we can actually surround a fire with multiple hoses from this single engine, instead of needing multiple engines to accomplish the same thing. The four-wheel drive helps us get to and through things we can't with our other rigs, and you can't overstate the importance of the high clearance in areas like ours where we deal with flooding."

In recognition of the benefactor who made this generous donation, the new-to-us rig has been christened "Mama Ang." Elsie Fire extends our warmest appreciation to Angela R. for her support!

# CODE COMPLIANCE UNDERWAY AT STATION 2

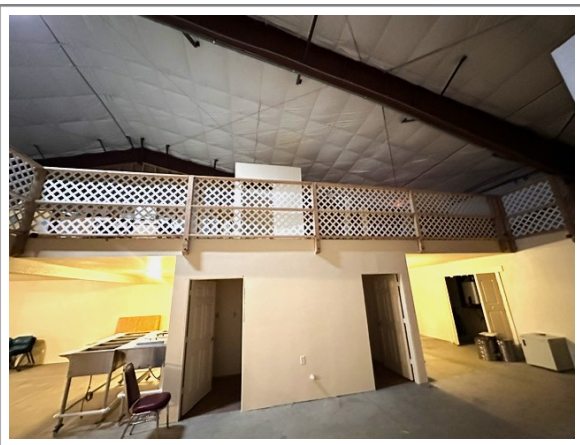
2024 has been a year of focused and diligent attention to Elsie Fire's new Station 2. Funded by a 2017 tax levy, and permitted in 2018 as a garage to house fire trucks, extensive construction beyond the scope of the permit led to a stop-work order from Clatsop County in November 2023. According to the letter received by EVRFPD from Building Inspector Van Wilfinger,



*"the unpermitted work does not meet current building codes... You will need to obtain the services of a licensed design professional to make a site visit, perform a complete code analysis, and prepare complete plans, structural calculations, and submit the appropriate permit applications for the work beyond the original scope of the shell storage building."*

The core issue, according to Board member Deidra Pitkin, owner of Pitkin Building Design, is the lack of permits, drawings, and a master plan for the extensive additions inside of the building. For example, a demising (dividing) wall was added to separate the building into two portions, as well as an upstairs, a kitchen, four bathrooms, and more. "When separating

an occupancy, numerous factors and building codes must be taken into account," said Pitkin. "These include distances to exits, exit locations, the number of bathrooms, fire walls, parking, septic capacity, drain-field areas, ADA compliance, structural analysis for additional loads and more—all of which are determined by the intended use and occupancy of the spaces."



*A portion of the upstairs Station 2*

The plans, code analysis, and structural calculations are nearing completion, and discussions are underway to identify the most cost-effective and functional solutions to the problems that have been identified.

*(continued on p. 3)*

## Code Compliance Underway at Station 2 (continued from p. 2)



*Indoor training space. If the upstairs is kept, additional structural supports and walls would further impede use of this space.*

Perhaps the most extensive issue concerns the upstairs. As built, it lacks adequate structural support, and will require installation of additional posts, shear walls, and hold-downs to meet building codes. "Part of the problem is that those additional structural supports would be installed in what is our only space at Station 2 for indoor trainings," said Chief Rob Davis, "creating additional obstructions in that space and making it less useful."

One major decision, then, will be whether to prioritize training space and sacrifice the upstairs, or keep the upstairs for office space and give up the option of having an open space for indoor trainings. Cost of the structural supports will figure into this decision as well. "We would love to see greater public attendance, either in person or virtually, at our monthly Board meetings," said Board Chair TJ Hecox. "That's where we discuss these issues, and we really want to hear from the community to see what they think."

Other problems identified by the architect and engineers working on Station 2 have more straightforward solutions, which are already in the works.

- A water system and plumbing have been installed, as has an on-demand water heater. These, along with electrical work beyond the scope of the original permit, are slated to be inspected and altered as needed for code compliance.
- Partially-completed bathrooms will be upgraded to meet ADA standards.
- A leaky roof is undergoing a series of repairs.
- The demising wall will be upgraded to meet fire-safety and structural regulations.
- A structure built to house the water pump, placed in an access easement, will be buried underground in a vault to retain functionality while not impeding easement access.

Elsie Fire is actively seeking qualified contractors willing to volunteer their time and/or materials to support this effort, and extends our deepest gratitude to the licensed professionals and other volunteers who have already donated many hours to this project.

# LETTER FROM THE CHIEF



First and foremost, Happy Holidays! By the time you read this, I hope that you all had the best Thanksgiving spent around the table with family and friends, and that you are now preparing to celebrate the joys of Christmas! This is a time of year to be thankful, to look back and reflect on the year, the ups and downs, the accomplishments, and begin to think about what the new year will look like.

I want to say that I am thankful for the community support that we have received, for the major donations the district has been awarded, and for the wins we have had as a team. This year has not come without its pitfalls and struggles, but what I can say when I look back over the last 10 months, is that we have come together, we continue to respond to the calls for assistance, and the team has bonded into much more than I could have pictured when I was asked to join this district back in February 2024.

In addition:

- We have had the opportunity to surplus some equipment that was no longer suitable to serve the district.
- We have added 3 replacement staff vehicles, 1 pumper tender (grant project) and 1 type 3 Wildland Urban Interface Apparatus that will have the ability to provide services to this community for many years. The receipt of the Pumper Tender wraps up a multiyear grant project started by Chief Mike Wammack.
- The district was able to reopen Station 3 and is feverishly working to find solutions to fully open Station 2.
- Between September and November, the District received multiple donations including "Mama Ang," 1 pickup truck, and thousands of dollars in donations from Warn Industries, DECKED, Rough Country, and Dailey's Tire and Auto totaling a **cash value of somewhere near \$70,000 dollars** all utilized to ensure that we are providing the best service we can to our community.

As 2025 rapidly approaches we will begin to look towards the fiscal year end in July, as we start to forecast our 2025-2026 budget starting in March and April. The district is actively seeking a Seismic Rehabilitation Grant project for Station 1, the current district headquarters, that if awarded could be as much as 2.5 million dollars (*continued on p.6*)

**Letter From The Chief (continued from page 5)**

to ensure that our main station can withstand a Cascadia size earthquake event, remaining a pillar to support the community during such an emergency. We have plans to continue to position ourselves to better respond to the community needs, to increase the number of volunteers, and get ourselves even more actively engaged in community events! Our training will continue to evolve, we will continue to pursue our goal of being an aggressive interior firefighting agency, because at the end of the day that is what you deserve. We plan on having Station 3 fully complemented with apparatus by Spring of 2025 to include 1 Fire engine, 1 Water Tender, and 1 Brush Fire apparatus. Stations 1 and 2 will remain fully complemented as they are now.

For those of you that listen to the scanner, you may hear some new and unfamiliar “Call Signs” on the radio. Effective December 1st, 2024, we have made some changes to our Chief Officer numbering to more effectively align with national standards:

- 3401 (fire chief) will be C34,
- 3402 (assistant chief) will be C341, and
- 3403 (training chief) will be C342.
- We have also implemented a new call sign Battalion 34 or BC34. This unit number will be utilized as the new on-duty officer responsible for operations of the district.

Our officer group has scheduled days of being “on duty” for the month to ensure seamless communication for our members and for our dispatch team!

I look forward to the opportunity to update you all again in spring of 2025, and please take time to enjoy your family and friends and get that reset before 2025 hits us. As always, we'll be here if you need us!

Sincerely,



Rob Davis  
Fire Chief  
Elsie-Vinemaple RFPD



*From our family to yours, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

### Meet Lieutenant Shawn Hensinger!



Currently the longest-serving member of our Elsie Fire team, Shawn joined EVRFPD in 2018. He graduated from the Firefighter's Academy in 2019, and earned his EMT certification in 2020 through Clatsop Community College. Today, he is the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Officer for Elsie Fire, coordinating medical training, supply management, and interfacing with State and Federal health authorities to achieve and maintain certification for the medically-licensed personnel in our District. He also serves as an instructor for Jewell School's Fire Science class, and recently worked with Division Chief Andi Baglien of Gearhart Fire to offer an Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) course at EVRFPD Station 1 that enabled four of Elsie Fire's volunteers to earn their EMR certifications. "I've always believed there is honor in service," says Hensinger. "That is why I serve my community. I think if a person has the ability to help, they should do so."

***"I'VE ALWAYS BELIEVED THERE IS HONOR IN SERVICE. THAT IS WHY I SERVE MY COMMUNITY. I THINK IF A PERSON HAS THE ABILITY TO HELP, THEY SHOULD DO SO." - Lt. Shawn Hensinger***

Before moving to Jewell, Shawn ran his own business as a general contractor and landscape designer in the greater Portland area for many years. "I was lucky to have a great clientele, who gave me the creative freedom to develop projects that suited their needs while also being fun for me to work on. And more importantly, having my own business gave me time to be there for my two boys, to coach their sports teams and support whatever they wanted to go after."



An avid outdoorsman, Shawn enjoys hunting, fishing, and being in nature. He also loves exploring the world with his wife, Vivian, and tries to visit a local fire station wherever they go. Earlier this year, he visited the Montmartre Fire Station in Paris (see image, left). "It's always nice to visit with brothers and sisters in service, and sometimes I can pick up new tricks to bring home, and/or leave behind some of ours." In addition to exchanging stories and tactical strategies, the firefighters exchanged patches, a longstanding tradition in the Fire Service worldwide.

# YOUR RESPONDERS IN ACTION



*Above: Elsie Fire assisted with the passenger extrication on a vehicle over the embankment on Hwy 26 which required LifeFlight for the driver. As seen on social media, the victim's dog was rescued and they were re-united at the hospital.*

**CALL LOG SUMMARY**  
**AUGUST 1 - OCTOBER 31,**  
**2024**

Elsie-Vinemable RFPD was toned out to 48 calls, and responded to them with an average response time that continues to beat the National average!

- 21 Medical Calls (EMS)
- 2 Fire Investigations
- 8 Public Assist Requests
- 1 Vehicle Fire
- 3 Grass/Brush Fires
- 4 Odor - Gas/Smoke
- 6 Motor Vehicle Accidents
- 3 Other



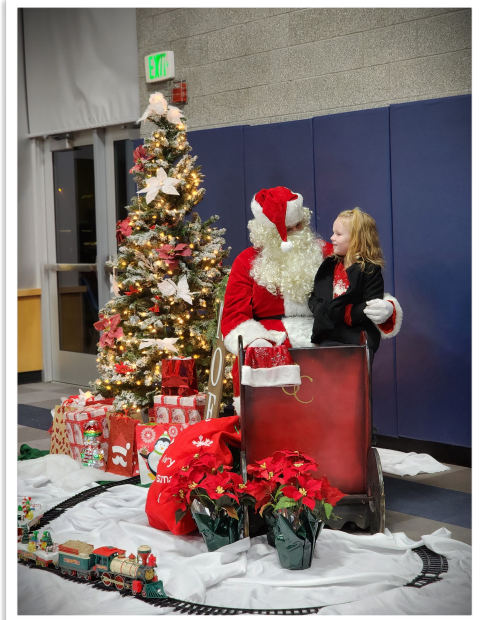
*Lt. Dietrich and Firefighter Gitts approach a vehicle that went off Hwy 26 in a single-vehicle MVA.*



*Elsie Fire providing standby medical service at a Jewell School track meet.*

# ELSIE FIRE COMMUNITY SERVICE

*We love our community, and lend a hand wherever we can.*



*Elsie Fire was delighted to provide VIP service to deliver Santa to Jewell School in our brand-new engine!*



*Elsie Firefighters and Board Members all pitched in at Thanksgiving to purchase turkeys, hams, and pies for some of our neighbors, and to fulfill some tags on the Giving Tree at Bakers General Store.*



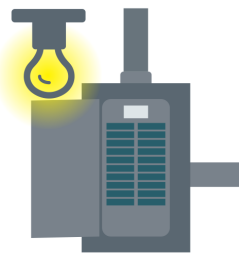




# Be fire smart with electricity in your home.

**45,** 

There are approximately **45,000** home electrical fires each year.



**Half** of all home electrical fires involve lighting equipment or home electrical wiring.



Home electrical fire deaths peak between **midnight and 8 a.m.**

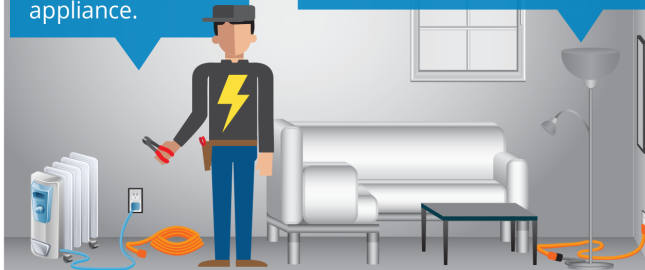


Peak months for electrical fire deaths are **November through March.**

Plug only 1 heat-producing appliance (like a coffee maker, space heater or microwave) directly into a wall outlet at a time.



Never use an extension cord with a heat-producing appliance.



Extension cords should only be used temporarily. Have an electrician install additional wall outlets where you need them.



For more information about electrical fire safety, visit [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov) and [www.nfpa.org/public-education](http://www.nfpa.org/public-education).

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**What's Inside**



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