



Fire Chief-

Updated Feb 8, 2024

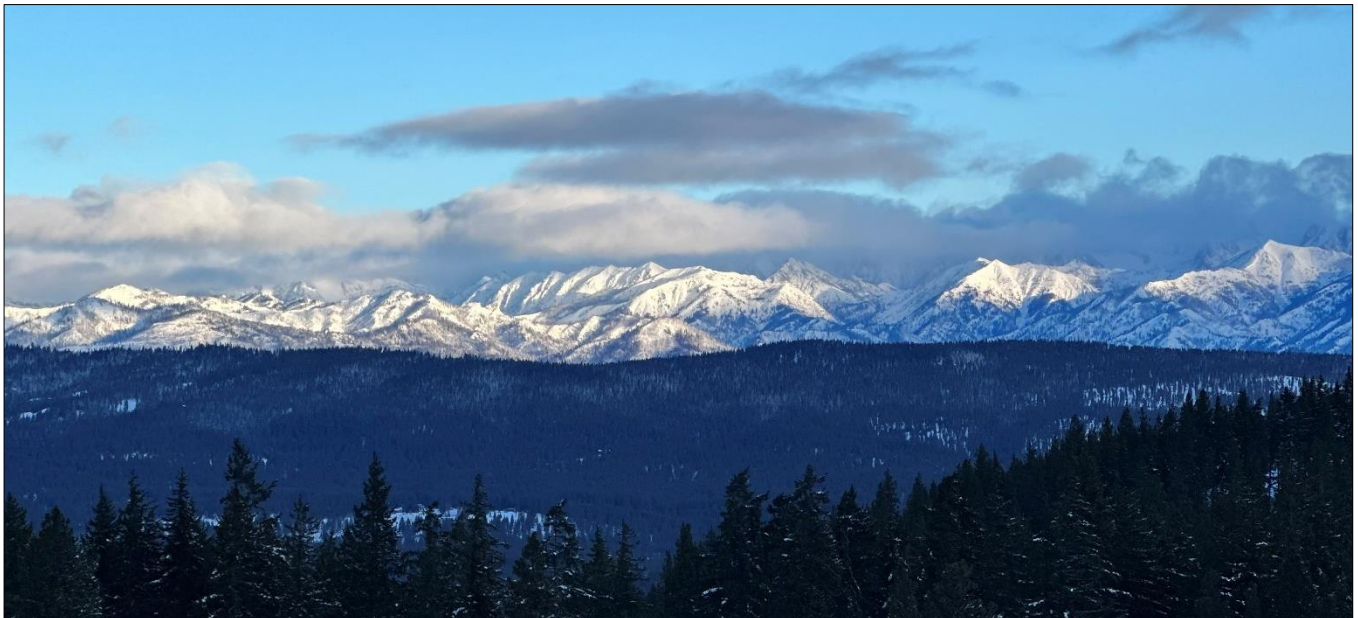
Kittitas County Fire District 7 Cle Elum, Washington

About the Community-

Nestled at the foot of the eastern side of the Washington Cascade Mountains off Interstate-90, Kittitas County Fire District 7 encompasses 126 square miles serving 7,000 residents in the unincorporated areas around the cities of Cle Elum, South Cle Elum and Roslyn. The historic mining community of Liberty, located off US Highway 97 toward Blewett Pass, is also served by the District (photo right).



Commonly referred to as *Upper County*, we are one of the fastest growing micro areas in the state due to the location, scenery, proximity to metro Seattle and abundance of recreational opportunities-including camping, hiking, golfing, fishing, and snow sports with hundreds of miles of state groomed snowmobile trails. The Teanaway Community Forest borders the community to the northeast, the LT Murray Wilderness to the south, and we are the gateway to thousands of acres of National Forest lands.



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The community is flanked by the Cascade Mountains to the west as well as the Stewart Mountains and Lake Cle Elum to the north. The Yakima River basin traverses the valley between the Cle Elum Ridge and South Cle Elum Ridge. Several large housing and resort communities are located within the District, including Suncadia, Tumble Creek, and Sun Country.

Suncadia is a planned community and four-season resort covering 6,300 acres. The multi-million-dollar project features a 4-star rated mountain lodge with convention center facilities, mountain-springs theme spa, sports center, three indoor and outdoor swimming pools, an outdoor venue amphitheater and winter ice skating, walking trails, and forested recreational areas.



Suncadia includes over 2,000 high-end residential units, a 254-room Lodge, a 40-unit condominium project, winery, and three golf courses. The resort hosts a constant stream of vacationers as well as major corporations holding conferences at the resort convention center, which has a capacity of 1,500 on any given day. Suncadia has not yet reached full build-out.

The regular population within the District is approximately 7,000 residents, but because of recreational pursuits, resort facilities and vacation homes, the population can more than triple during the summer months, holidays, and weekends.



About the Fire District-

OVERVIEW: Kittitas County Fire District 7 is the largest fire district in the Upper Kittitas County and was founded in 1980 under RCW Title 52. The District is directed by three elected Fire Commissioners serving staggered six-year terms of office.

The District provides services in accordance with the mission and statutes that govern fire protection districts, including

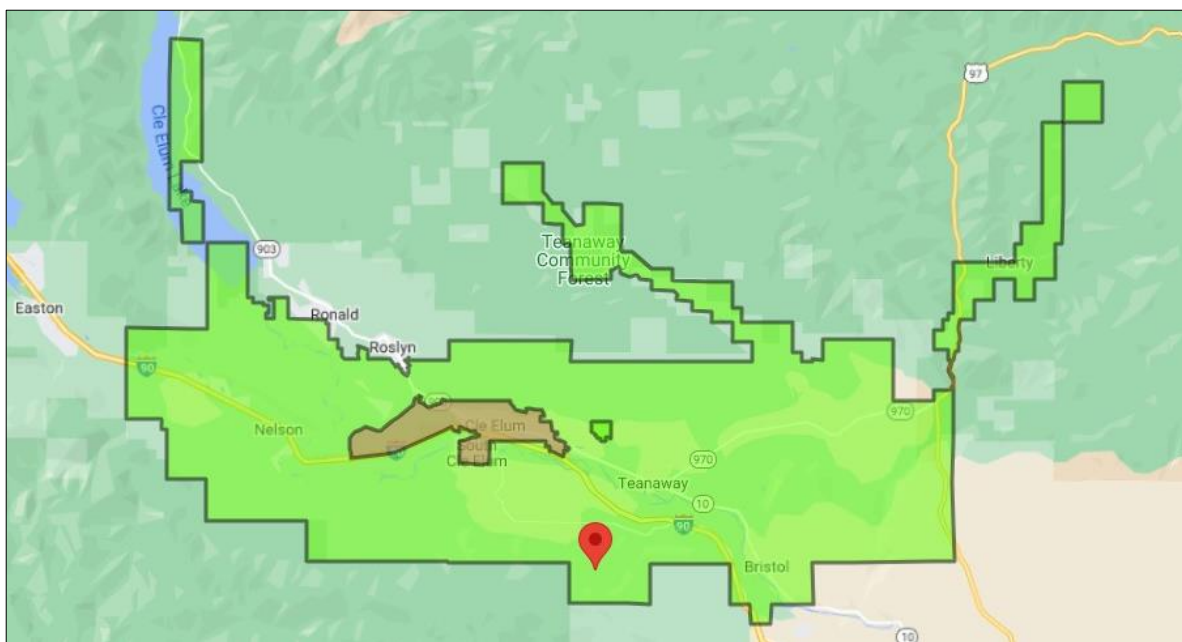
Full-Time Firefighters:	16
Volunteer Firefighters:	52
Fire District #7 Square Miles:	126
District Population 2024:	7,000
2023 Call Volume:	867
2020 Call Volume:	692
24/7 Staffed Stations:	2
Volunteer Fire Stations:	6

Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Basic Life Support (BLS) response; Fire Prevention/Public Education; Fire Suppression (vehicle, residential and commercial); Wildland Firefighting; Hazardous Materials Response-Operations; and Technical Rescue/Special Operations (including rope rescue and ice rescue).



The district provides emergency services from eight fire stations under a combination agency of career firefighters and large contingent of volunteer firefighters. Basic staffing assures two to four career firefighters on-duty, primarily responding from Station 73 off Interstate 90 at Golf Course Road with integral volunteer response support. As noted in the staffing table, the District is currently working to staff a second station full-time (Station 72) off Airport Road and State Route 970 on the east end of Cle Elum.

In addition to our firefighters, District staff include the Fire Chief, two volunteer Battalion Chiefs, day Captain, volunteer Medical Services Officer, volunteer Public Information Officer, Chief Administrative Officer/District Secretary, Administrative Specialist, Fleet Mechanic and Facility Maintenance Technician.



CRITICAL ROLE OF OUR VOLUNTEERS: Volunteer firefighters have been and continue to be a key component of KCFD7. Volunteer recruitment and retention challenges have severely impacted public safety in communities all across the country and KCFD7 is no exception.



There will never be a time when the District will staff all eight of our fire stations with on-duty firefighters, therefore our volunteer firefighters are *critical* to providing EMS and fire services. Firefighter staffing becomes even more challenging during the wildfire season, which lasts from May through October.

About 20% of the time, the District also experiences overlapping calls where there are two or more calls going on at once. These factors, coupled with the expansive size of the District and one way in, one way out county roadway systems, there are times when calls for service can stretch an already thin workforce. Active and well-trained volunteers are critical to serving the needs of the District and our citizens.

“NEIGHBORS, HELPING NEIGHBORS”: Upper Kittitas County is a close-knit community of fire districts/departments with shared borders throughout the region. Mutual aid has been a big part of the daily operations in Upper County. The District is relied upon to support neighboring communities and we have benefited from regular support and help from our neighboring fire agencies.



The KCFD7 motto is *“Neighbors, Helping Neighbors”*.



With most of Upper County in a wildland-urban interface zone, KCFD7 lends mutual aid for structure fires, wildland fires and assists in covering for EMS calls when the area is experiencing high call volumes. Likewise, our neighbors are always willing to help us when needed.

The District assists with apparatus and firefighting strength locally and regionally according to interagency agreements and state wildfire mobilization plans.

Wildfires are a grave risk in our forested lands intertwined with homes, farms, ranches, businesses, campgrounds and vacation cabins. During the summer, even the most minor fire can flare up and devour hundreds of acres almost instantly, partly due to the region’s dryness and the afternoon winds. All agencies in Upper County respond quickly to assist in suppressing wildfires, including the crews of wildland firefighters and aircraft from the

state Department of Natural Resources stationed nearby.

EMS SUPPORT: Kittitas County Hospital District 2 operates Upper Kittitas County Medic One staffed with paramedics serving the majority of Upper County; KCFD7 provides support for Advanced Life Support (Paramedic) responses with our career and volunteer personnel. The District has Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) and is the primary Basic Life Support (BLS) backup ambulance transport agency for Hospital District 2.



DISTRICT 7 FIRE LEVY HISTORY AND GROWTH: KCFD7 was awarded a SAFER grant in 2017, allowing the District to hire nine full-time firefighters. In 2018, KCFD7 attempted a levy lid lift for the

first time in district history to allow for the continued funding of the nine paid SAFER grant firefighters. The levy asked for \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value; the levy failed.

In August of 2020, voters approved a levy lift to bring back the tax rate to \$1.00 per \$1,000 of assessed property value, which was the initial rate first established when the district was formed in 1980. Another levy lift was approved by voters in 2022, bringing the rate to \$1.25 in 2023.

Citizen support and significant increases in assessed property valuation rates due to growth have allowed the District to permanently retain all nine full-time firefighters positions and add more staffing to serve our citizens. Additionally, levy funds are being applied to update aging apparatus, improve career and volunteer firefighter training, expand station facilities, address volunteer recruitment/retention and help the District meet the anticipated demand of future emergency services.

In 2023, the total assessed property valuation rate of Fire District 7 was \$4 billion, 255 million and has increased to \$5 billion, 219 million for 2024.

UNIQUE RESPONSE AREA AND INCIDENTS: Interstate 90 is one of the state's major east-west highways with 31,000 vehicles and commercial trucks through the KCFD7's response area daily (over ten million annually). In addition to the 19 miles of I-90, KCFD7 also covers approximately 20 miles along SR-970, extending up onto US-97 toward Blewett Pass.



This accounts for many collision responses and extrications during the busy summer vacation travel season as well as the challenging snow-covered winter months.



During the summer, fire response to car and recreation vehicles, commercial trucks, grass, and wildfires are frequent as I-90, state highways, county roads, and recreational areas pass through forested areas.

The immediate proximity of roadways and recreational areas to grasslands and forests raise our needs for wildfire prevention and protection to a high priority.

The Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest surrounds KCFD7 on three sides, creating a unique wildland-urban interface. Recent state and national responses, such as the Jolly Mountain Fire and Taylor Bridge, have dramatically highlighted our wildfire hazard and concerns.

The Ideal Fire Chief Candidate-

This will be the first time the Fire District will hire a full-time Fire Chief after many years of part-time fire chief services contracted from other districts.



Kittitas County Fire District 7 is seeking a seasoned emergency services professional who will *lead by example* in fire suppression, fire prevention and the delivery of coordinated emergency medical services with unwavering integrity and a “*people first*” mindset.

The ideal Fire Chief will inspire and lead career and volunteer firefighters from the front by *demonstrating expert firemanship*. The Fire Chief must be operationally minded, *hold safety at the highest priority*, and not be afraid to get his or her hands dirty while leading the team.

The next Fire Chief will be expected to create an *agency culture of mutual respect* through mentoring, coaching, fostering personal/professional growth of personnel, expecting team accountability, and by demonstrating *effective open communication* inside and outside of the District.

In fostering a culture of mutual respect and understanding, the Fire Chief will be expected to *actively strengthen relationships* and interagency mutual aid with our Upper County fire and EMS partners.

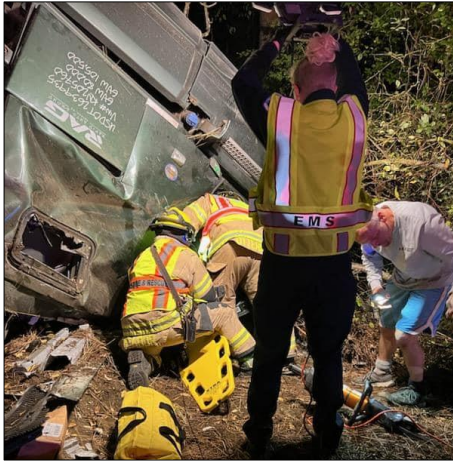
In order to assist our citizens with the cost of homeowner insurance, the next Fire Chief will demonstrate a clear working understanding of the service criteria used to rate Fire Districts by the Washington Survey and Rating Bureau (WSRB) and will be expected to *take short-term and long-term steps to improve the District’s WSRB rating*.

As wildfires are a critical threat in Upper County due to the numerous wildfire-urban interfaces in the District, the ideal Fire Chief candidate will *demonstrate an extensive knowledge and experience* in wildfire prevention, wildfire suppression, wildfire response mobilization, and other wildfire operations in order to take steps to *mitigate risks and plan for potential wildfire impacts*.



The next Fire Chief will be expected to guide the Fire District through the *interface of career and volunteer firefighters* as staffing models and future demands for service *change with growth*.

The Fire Chief must have an enhanced and demonstrated understanding and history of *working positively* with career and volunteer firefighters. The ideal candidate will have *experience in a combination career-volunteer* fire department or district, to include volunteer recruitment, training, and retention.



The ideal candidate will have expertise in creating *Strategic Plans* to help guide current and future fire and Emergency Medical Services, such as response expectations, staffing levels, leadership positions/organizational chart, capital facility needs, fleet upgrades/maintenance/replacement and operational goals with a *critical eye toward future community needs and growth*.

The District is changing over to a Lexipol policy manual. The new Fire Chief must have *experience in creating, reviewing, updating and issuing policies and procedures* necessary for the effective operation of the District.

In addition to the desired strengths outlined above, the ideal candidate will:

- Possess outstanding communication, administrative and technical skills with a commitment to service and demonstrated accomplishments.
- Be customer oriented, collaborative, politically skilled and innovative self-starter who can embody and embrace the Fire District's mission, vision, core values and service expectations as outlined by the Board of Fire Commissioners.
- Ensure, creation, implementation, maintenance and compliance of District policies and procedures which meet fire service best practices and safe operational outcomes.
- Use appropriate data for management and operational decisions that ensure resources are used in the most efficient and effective manner possible and measurable outcomes are achieved.
- Foster a collaborative labor-management environment and actively build relationships with union members.
- Foster a collaborative, empowering and valued culture for career and volunteer firefighters to enhance the emergency capabilities of the District.
- Oversee and successfully complete projects with minimal oversight.
- Apply knowledge of best practices and legal requirements in budgeting and fiscal management.
- Provide strong emergency operational leadership as needed.
- Regularly report to the Board of Fire Commissioners and represent the Fire District at meetings, and other public functions as needed.
- Foster the implementation of EMS and fire service best practices and training for District personnel.
- Effectively and efficiently address personnel issues in a confidential, appropriate, and constructive manner.
- Work effectively as part of assigned coalitions, task forces, and/or community partnerships which enhance overall services or preparedness for District residents.
- Perform or delegate Public Information Officer duties during emergency incidents.

- Create a culture of coaching and mentoring which achieves results without creating undue stress, to include growing others for future roles within the organization.
- Demonstrate and deepen a functional knowledge of Washington laws, regulations, and standards in relation to the delivery of fire and rescue services by fire agencies.
- Consistently demonstrate effective verbal and written skills to professionally communicate with internal and external stakeholders.
- Meet the physical demands and work environment conditions as outlined in the Fire Chief job description.
- Primary residency within Upper County (Elk Heights to Easton) within 12-months. The Fire Chief should be prepared to respond to major emergency incidents from home.

Education and Experience-

NOTE: An equivalent combination of education and experience which provides the applicant with the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the job may be acceptable:



- Graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with a degree in Fire Science or Technology, Public Administration, or related public safety field is desired.
- Minimum of ten (10) years of progressively responsible career fire service experience with an emphasis on wildfire/rural/urban firefighting and delivering Emergency Medical Services is required.
- Demonstrated administrative fire agency leadership and experience which would be relevant or prepare the candidate for the position of Fire Chief is required.
- Incident command system training and experience, including NIMS ICS 300 and 400, is required.
- **Minimum experience as NWCG ICT-5 is required, and NWCG ICT-4 or above is desired.**
- IFSAC Instructor 1, IFSAC HazMat Operations, IFSAC Fire Officer 2 are required and EMT-B certification in Washington state is desired.
- Experience serving within combination career-volunteer fire agencies is desired.
- Valid Washington state driver's license without record of suspension or revocation (or can be obtained within 30-days of residency) is required.

Compensation and Benefits-

The current annual salary range for this position is \$150,000 to \$175,000; non-union, FLSA exempt;

The District offers a full benefits package with affordable options for full family coverage for medical, dental, vision and life insurance, with 100% paid for the employee and 80% for dependents;

Personal Time Off (PTO) and sick time accruals with 11 annual paid holidays;

Deferred Compensation (with possible match);

Participation in the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters (LEOFF 2) plan;

Assigned District cellular phone and vehicle for regular and emergency response to incidents.

How to Apply-

Please send a *letter of interest and resume* to:

Chief Administrative Officer/District Secretary Eryn Micallef
Kittitas County Fire District 7
31 Firehouse Road
Cle Elum, Washington 98922 or accounting@kcf7.com

If you wish to remain a confidential applicant for the first screening of the candidate letter/resume, please indicate such in your letter.

Finalists for the Fire Chief position screened from the letter/resume submission will be asked to submit a formal application; the process for the finalist(s) will be public and candidates may be expected to participate in public assessments or events.

The District's Hiring Committee will conduct a multi-phased screening process that may include follow-up written assessments (such as a leadership questionnaire), technical assessment center, telephone or Zoom interviews, community forums, and/or site visits to the District.

The District has a desire to fill the open Fire Chief Position within 90-days. **The letter of interest/ resume is due by 1700 hours on February 29, 2024.** The Commissioners will review applications and narrow the candidate list at a Special Meeting on February 29th at 1800 hours. Panel interviews will be held at the end of March, with a preferred candidate named in the beginning of April after Commissioner interviews held in a Special Meeting. The Commissioners hope to offer a starting date on or about May 1st.



REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE:

Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 1800 hours

Thursday, March 14, 2024 at 1800 hours

Thursday, April 11, 2024 at 1800 hours

Thursday, May 9, 2024 at 1800 hours

Nothing contained in this announcement, job description or any other written policy of the district is intended to be part of any employment relationship or contract. Announcements, job descriptions or any other written policy of the District are merely statements of policy and do not amount to promises of specific treatment or employment relationship; furthermore, the District reserves the right to modify the aforementioned announcement, job description and District policies at any time. The District is an equal opportunity employer.