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Fire Marshal Ken Carlson

"We have much work

to do and our success

is dependent on our

community connections

and the passion of every

member of the Bellevue

Fire Department."

MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE MARSHAL

I am asked regularly if I "run" the department. My response is always the same: No, that person is the Fire Chief. While Fire Prevention certainly implies that we are charged with preventing fires, few outside of Fire Service really know or understand how we go about trying to achieve that goal. In short, it is through:

- Inspection of every building in the City of Bellevue and the communities we serve (Beaux Arts Village, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Medina, Newcastle and Yarrow Point) except single-family homes, to ensure that the buildings are maintained in accordance with the applicable codes and standards. We do this together with our Operations Division.
- We review plans for new buildings and fire/life safety systems to ensure they comply with the appropriate codes and standards. We then inspect the buildings and systems to ensure they are installed in accordance with the same codes and standards.
- We assist owners and managers of high-rise buildings in the development of their fire evacuation plans, training their staff and providing feedback on the evacuation drills.
- When fires do occur, we investigate to determine where the fire started (the origin) and how it started (the cause). We use that information to target our educatin efforts and/or update our codes and standards.

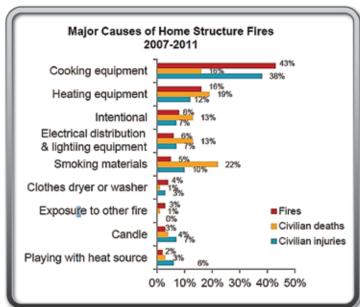
Our homes, or rather what we do in them, is "our" fire problem here in Bellevue and across the United States. In 2003, home structure fires caused 83% of civilian fire deaths and 78% of the civilian fire injuries. 1

Because we do not inspect these structures, addressing this issue is a challenge. Every year, we host an Open House at each of our 9 fire stations, providing cooking demonstrations, a fire trailer and a fire sprinkler trailer, all in an effort to raise awareness of the problem.

We have created cooking safety videos in multiple languages, which are available on our web site at: www.bellevuewa.gov/fire_marshal_message.htm.

Fire Prevention has also been the recipient of a number of grants over the years which have enabled us to install smoke detectors and special cooking elements that all but eliminate the possibility of a cooking fire.





¹ Overview of the U.S. Fire Problem. Retrieved March 2, 2015 from www. nfpa.org/~/media/Files/Research/Fact%20sheets/FireOverview.pdf

Ken Carlson Fire Marshal

NEW PERSONNEL

The Fire Prevention Division is pleased to announce Brooke Robinson as the new Fire Prevention Officer to the Bellevue Fire Department.

Brooke Robinson was hired in May 2014. He was born and raised in Western Washington in the town of Orting on 5 acres with the Puyallup River in his backyard. Brooke is mechanically inclined and enjoys drag racing and riding motorcycles. In fact, he has been riding motorcycles since he was 5 years old. He also enjoys the outdoors - fishing, playing softball, golfing and hunting.

Brooke is a graduate of Bates Technical College with an Associate of Technology degree in Fire Service. Brooke has been a volunteer Firefighter with the Mountain View Fire & Rescue Department and has been working for Patriot Fire Protection since graduating from Bates. He started as a Permit Specialist and Backflow Technician, advanced to a Fire Sprinkler Inspector and, most recently, a Fire Sprinkler Fitter Apprentice where he installed sprinkler systems in commercial buildings. We are excited to have Brooke join us. Please help me in welcoming Brooke to the department.



Brooke Robinson

Sincerely,

2014 OPEN HOUSE

On October 4th, we held an Open House at each of our 9 Fire Stations allowing us to spend some quality time with our community. The Bellevue Fire Department literally opens its doors and lets our community walk through the Fire Stations, touch the equipment and engage with our Firefighters who are happy to answer questions and concerns. The annual open houses also afford us an opportunity to share some important information.

Some of the highlights we shared this year:

We taught "hands-only" CPR, an important skill for our citizens to have.

In fact, that knowledge is a significant factor in Bellevue Fire Department having the highest heart attack survival rate in the nation.







"Hands-only CPR is a significant factor in Bellevue Fire Department having the highest heart attack survival rate in the nation."

We were extremely fortunate to host a fire sprinkler trailer thanks to the Washington State Fire Marshal's Office.

The sprinkler trailer provides a live demonstration of how fire sprinklers work in fire conditions, providing us an opportunity to respond to some of the myths and misunderstanding regarding their operation.



"...providing us an opportunity to respond to some of the myths and misunderstandings..."

Grays Harbor Fire District #5 graciously loaned us their fire safety trailer which allowed us to demonstrate escaping a smoke-filled home.



"...which allowed us to demonstrate escaping a smoke-filled home."

Cooking-related fires are the leading cause of fires in Bellevue and throughout the U.S. To raise awareness and provide useful information, we performed demonstrations showing what to do/ not do if you encountered a grease fire.



"...we performed demonstrations showing what to do/ not do if you encountered a grease fire."

Firefighters also taught the appropriate way to use a fire extinguisher.



"The open house takes great effort and coordination to put on, but we have a lot of fun and thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to engage with our community."



NOTABLE FIRES

The Bellevue Fire Department investigates every fire in order to determine where (origin) and how (cause) it started. The information gleaned from investigating the origin and cause is then utilized to focus our fire prevention efforts where they will yield the most impact.

Most of the fires are investigated by firefighters but those meeting certain criteria (injury, death, suspicious in nature or exceeding a specified dollar loss) are investigated by a Fire Investigator working in the Fire Prevention Division.

Notable Fire-January 11, 2014



The homeowner was alerted by a "loud explosion" in the early morning hours. When looking out of the house, the homeowner reporting seeing arching. Firefighters conducting an exterior search discovered a tree in contact with the high voltage power lines.

Heavy winds and rain allowed the tree to fall onto the power lines. An electrical arc traveled through the underground conductors into a shed causing smoldering and charring above the water heater. The weather conditions at the time of the incident included wind and rain. Continued exposure to wind and rain due to the open door allowed the combustible materials inside the shop to become saturated preventing further extension of the fire.

Notable Fire-April 7, 2014



A passerby reported a fire and people evacuating from a duplex in the early morning hours. There were 4 occupants; 3 adults and 1 juvenile. Investigators determined the origin of the fire to be in the garage but a definitive cause could not be determined. The juvenile was transported to an area hospital but did not survive. The investigators were unable to locate a working smoke detector in the residence.

Notable Fire-April 11, 2014



A mattress set on fire adjacent to an apartment building was reported shortly after 4 p.m. Fire extended up the outside of the building and into the attic.

To extinguish the fire in the attic, firefighters had to remove the ceiling in one unit displacing one resident until the unit could be repaired. No suspect was identified.

Notable Fire-May 19, 2014



A man called 911 to report that his neighbor's house was on fire. The house was up for sale and thought to be vacant by the neighbor. Firefighters arrived to find flames shooting out of the windows.

Investigators determined that the fire started in a covered porch and was caused by an improperly installed radiant heater. The heater was likely inadvertently turned on hours before during an open house.

Notable Fire- November 26, 2014



A passerby reported a fire in a two story commercial building shortly after 1:00 a.m. Firefighters arrived to find both floors of the building fully involved. The business owner arrived on scene while the firefighters were still in the process of extinguishing the fire and reported that every room in the building was under video surveillance. The recording device was retrieved

and the origin of the fire was identified as the engine compartment of a car that had been towed into the repair shop earlier in the day. A cause was not determined.

Notable Fire- December 22, 2014



This fire originated in the garage of a single family house. The homeowner reported that either he or their cat inadvertently turned the stove on.

Combustible materials were stored on the stove top and the homeowner was unable to extinguish the fire.

2014 INVESTIGATIONS

Bellevue Fire Investigators were called to investigate the origin and cause of 19 fires:

13 Structure fires4 Vehicle fires1 Appliance fire1 Incendiary (arson) fire

ANNUAL INSPECTIONS

The Bellevue Fire Department annually inspects every commercial building in Bellevue and our contract cities, including multi-family dwellings. This represents 2,629 buildings containing 8,549 tenants. Of these, the Fire Prevention Division inspects the higher hazard and more technically complex buildings (1,397 buildings/3,348 tenants), while the Operations Division (fire fighters) inspects the balance of these buildings (1,232 buildings/5,201 tenants).

From 2006 through 2011, the Fire Department was able to meet our performance target of completing 100% of our annual fire and life safety inspections. In 2012 & 2013, the Fire Department was unable to complete 100% of the assigned inspections (84 inspections in 2012 and 495 inspections in 2013 were not inspected) due to a combination of both an increase in the number of buildings (40) representing 370,954 square feet and 197 additional tenants within these new buildings and a reduction in staffing (1 Fire Prevention Officer and 8 fire fighters). Currently, an additional 5,591,536 of new building square footage is under construction and millions more is in permit review.

In 2014, a budget request was presented to the city for additional resources to add 2 Fire Prevention Officers to the staff so that the Fire Prevention Division would be able to complete 100% of the inspections and provide fire code/fire prevention training to all staff. Because of city budget constraints, the request for additional staff was not funded and therefore, a change was needed to the current program. That change will be implemented in 2015/2016.

The new program consists of biennial (every two years) inspections, except for multi-family residential buildings lacking either a fire alarm system or a fire

sprinkler system. These occupancies are most at risk and warrant a higher level of oversight than all others. The new program will result in roughly a 30% reduction in the number of annual inspections. This new workload will be re-distributed amongst Fire Prevention Officers and should result in higher quality inspections. It will also allow for providing 16 hours of fire code training annually for all staff that conduct inspections (Fire Prevention and Operations Division), and provide capacity to conduct community fire prevention outreach.

In addition to the above changes, the construction inspection team has been reassigned to the annual inspection team. Combining these teams allows for all new construction and annual inspections to be shared, as well as building efficiencies by combining new construction/tenant improvement inspections with annual inspections at the same location. This change provides an opportunity for our staff to grow their skill sets and provide more depth in both experience and coverage.

For additional information about the Bellevue Fire Department New Construction or Annual Inspection programs, please contact:

Steve Swarthout
Asst. Fire Marshal at
425-452-4112 or
sswarthout@bellevuewa.gov.



Washington Surveying and Rating Bureau (WSRB) evaluates every fire department in the State of Washington and assigns a numerical score ranging



from 1 (best) to 10 (worst). According to WSRB, "The Protection Class evaluation

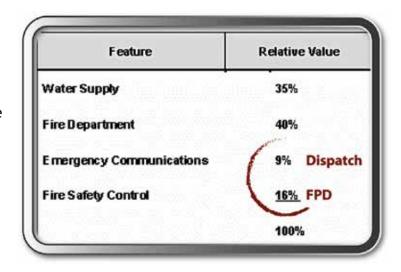
process recognizes the efforts of communities to provide fire-protection services for citizens and property owners. This is why insurance companies use Protection Classes to help establish fair premiums for fire insurance — generally offering lower premiums in communities with better protection. By offering economic benefits for communities that invest in their firefighting services, the evaluation provides a real incentive for improving and maintaining fire protection. By classifying communities' ability to suppress fires, WSRB also helps the communities evaluate their fire-protection services."

The Bellevue Fire Department was last evaluated in 2003 and assigned a rating (the proper term is Public Protection Classification) of 2 – one of only 3 in the State (there are no Class 1 Departments in Washington State). Ideally, WSRB evaluates fire departments every 5 years and we are well over due. In fact, we received notification from WSRB in April that we were on the short list of agencies they are planning to evaluate in the very near future.

Some, but not all, insurance companies use the WSRB rating to set insurance rates. From an insurance perspective, the better the rating, the lower their losses will be. For a homeowner, rates won't change appreciably whether the rating is a 2, 3 or 4. For a commercial business, the difference in their rates between a Class 2 and a Class 3 could be as much as a 12% increase if their insurance company relies on the WSRB classification.

What goes into the rating?

There are four key areas:



Each community we serve (Beaux Arts Village, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Medina, Newcastle and Yarrow Point) is evaluated separately. In 2003, Bellevue was assigned a Class 2 rating, while each of our contract cities was assigned a Class 3 rating.

In 2003, we were assigned 948 "deficiency points", 53 points away from a Class 3 rating. In the intervening years, WSRB has changed the way they will evaluate us, placing more emphasis on the fire department (40% vs 39%) and fire safety control (16% vs 13%) and less on the water supply (35% vs 39%) so it will be difficult to predict how we will fare with the upcoming evaluation.

Prior to launching the modified evaluation matrix, WSRB used existing data on file for 12% of all communities and found that the changes would result in an improvement in ratings for 2/3 of the communities and 1/3 would see a decline. While we are not yet 100% ready for WSRB to arrive, a great deal of effort has already been made so that we can put our best foot forward because this really does impact our customers.



R-2 ALARM RETROFITS

R-2 occupancies (apartments) retroactive fire alarm requirements are part of many in the Fire Code for existing buildings intended to provide a minimum degree of fire and life safety to persons occupying them.

The buildings targeted by this requirement comprise the oldest housing stock in Bellevue, affording the residents with the least level of fire safety. If there is a fire in these buildings, there is no timely way to notify all of the occupants, putting everyone in the building at substantial risk.

The fire alarm systems required by the fire code and installed per the design and installation requirements, in accordance with NFPA 72 (2010 edition), shall have:

- 1) Audibility throughout:
- In sleeping areas, the sound wave shall be 520 Hz, square wave
- 15 decibels (dBA) above the average ambient sound level
- Minimum 70 dBA (75 dBA in sleeping areas).
- Maximum of 120 dBA at any "hearing distance"
- Visual notification in all public and common areas (exit balconies, hallways, meeting rooms, etc.)
 *Note: dwelling and sleeping units shall have the capability of supporting strobes.
- 3) Panel must be located in an accessible/heated location with room clearly marked
- 4) Annual maintenance and inspection is required

To allow the identified occupancies to develop a budget for the significant financial impact of

retroactively installing a manual fire alarm system, the Bellevue Fire Department developed a 3-year plan:

- In 2013, a site inspection of all apartment buildings not having alarm systems installed was conducted.
 A "Notice of Violation" was issued for buildings meeting the criteria of the Fire Code for the installation of fire alarm systems.
- At the end of 2014, an audit was conducted to

verify that progress had been made (e.g. permits filed, work progressing, inspections completed) on all buildings issued a Notice of Violation in 2013. Notices were sent out to all occupancies that had not complied with this requirement. These



occupancies were informed that their case had been moved to code enforcement action and they would be required to appear before Bellevue's Hearing Examiner in February 2015.

 At the end of 2015, the Bellevue Fire Department will verify that all work has been completed and that all final inspections have been performed.
 The occupancies that have not complied with this requirement will be moved to code enforcement action and will be required to appear before Bellevue's Hearing Examiner in February 2015.



For more information on, or questions about, this requirement, please contact Steve Swarthout, Asst. Fire Marshal Inspections/Investigations, sswarthout@bellevuewa.gov or 425-452-4112.

HIGH-RISE ASSOCIATION MEETING

The High Rise Association met on April 10th in the Civica Office Commons. The agenda covered a wide range of topics and filled the meeting room to capacity:

Scan Alert

This legacy system, used to transmit fire alarm signals to a central station monitoring company, will no longer be available effective April 30th. Attendees were reminded of the importance of converting to another form of alarm transmission prior to the cutoff.

Stair Signage Requirements

Existing high-rise buildings are required to have photo luminescent stair signs at every landing in all stairs. The signs provide invaluable information for building occupants and firefighters. The photo luminescent requirement allows this information to be viewed if power is lost – a lesson learned from the tragedy on 9/11/2001 in New York.

Revised Impairment Requirements

In an effort to ensure that Bellevue Fire is receiving timely and appropriate notification of life/safety system impairments, a revised system was introduced at the meeting. Changes were implemented after working with representatives of stakeholders and involve a series of color coded tags that quickly identify the readiness state of the system and timeline thresholds that identify when Fire Department notification is required. See the "Impairments" information sheet for additional information.

Changes in evacuation drills

Bellevue Fire will no longer participate in high-rise residential building drills unless specifically requested to do so. These buildings are still required to conduct the annual drills, but because only employees, and not residents, are required to participate, there was not as much value with our participation as other high-rise buildings.

Emergency Operation Plan Submittals

A more structured submittal and review process was unveiled along with a high level overview of the intent

of the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). Creating and maintaining the document does not need to be an onerous or time-consuming process. For additional information, use these links: EOP Submittal Form; Fire Safety and Emergency Plan template; Fire Safety and Emergency Plan Information Sheet.

Building Placards

The International Fire Code requires that all new buildings be equipped with a "Building Information Card" located in the Fire Command Center. The purpose of the card is to provide firefighters with quick, easy-to-read access to important building information. Many building owners have been approached by companies to provide these cards, leaving the impression that they are required for existing buildings. While Bellevue Fire supports the concept, it is not currently required for existing buildings. That may change with the adoption of the 2015 International Fire Code.

Online training

Employees are required to receive fire safety and evacuation training when they are hired and on an annual basis thereafter. Based on our experience with the annual high-rise evacuation drills, this does not appear to be something that is consistently being delivered. The meeting provided an opportunity to explore the delivery of online training to augment the training that was currently provided. While many building owners are already augmenting their instruction by utilizing online training, a post-meeting survey identified little support in moving forward with this initiative.

iPad Pilot project

The Bellevue Fire Department did a pilot project using iPads in an attempt to become more efficient, eliminate paper forms and provide customers with real-time information. While there were lessons learned along the way, the pilot left customers confused and staff frustrated and it was abandoned.

The meeting was well attended, and there was a highlevel of engagement throughout!





The International Fire Code sets forth minimum requirements for maintaining the life safety of building occupants. In this instance, stairwell identification signs are required at each floor landing in new and existing buildings with interior exit stairways and ramps connecting more than three stories. The intent of this requirement is to make signs visible and immediately recognizable to building occupants and emergency responders using the stairway.

Required signs installed in the interior exit stairways and ramps of high-rise buildings shall be self-luminous or photo luminescent with the exception of apartment buildings (R-2).

The intent of this requirement is to ensure that occupants can safely egress a building via exit stairways in the event that normal or emergency power supplies fail during an emergency. The luminous or photoluminescence makes the signs visible and immediately recognizable to occupants and emergency responders.

In 2012, the Bellevue Fire Department began requiring existing high-rise buildings meet the Stairway Identification Sign requirement of the code. In 2014, the Bellevue Fire Department met with the Downtown High-Rise Association to discuss this and many other topics. Recognizing that this requirement created a significant financial impact, facilities were given a 1-year grace period in which to make arrangements to install the required signs.

REGIONAL CONSISTENCY

The Bellevue Fire Department has worked regionally to develop consistency in our application and interpretation of the International Fire Code whenever possible. Those efforts have resulted in the creation of four public information sheets:

- Fire Safety for Buildings under Construction
- Carbon Monoxide Detectors in Existing Residential Structures
- Smoke Alarm/Smoke Detector Requirements in Existing Homes, Apartments & Condominiums
- Sky Lanterns

We have also worked regionally to develop consistency in permit applications with area fire departments and the fire protection industry. Those efforts have resulted in the creation of two, over-the-counter permit applications that can be utilized in 19 cities:

- Fire Alarm Transmitter Replacement
- Over-the-Counter Sprinkler Permit

We will continue to explore opportunities to develop consistency in our adoption, application, interpretation and training of the International Fire Code and associated standards.



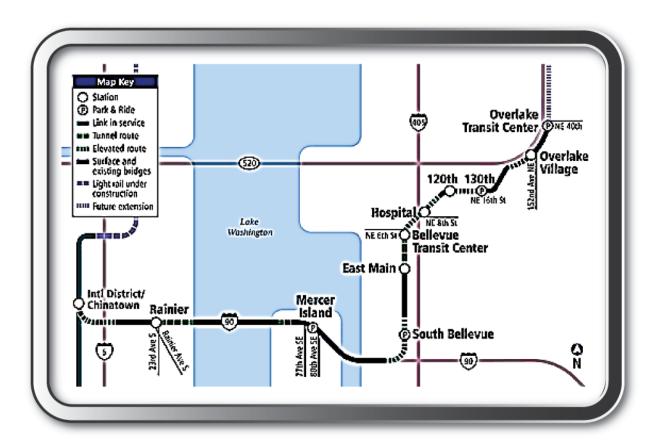
SOUND TRANSIT PERMIT REVIEW

The East Link project continued forward progress in 2014 on the design of each contract package for the project. The entire project is broken up into five major contract packages:

- E320 starts at the I-90 East bridge abutment through the South Bellevue Station and on to the East Main Station.
- E330 is confined to just the downtown tunnel build.
- E335 starts after the East Main Station and on through the downtown tunnel and the Bellevue Transit Center Station. From there, it continues over I-405 to the Hospital Station and on to the 120th Ave Station.
- E340 is track between 120th Ave and 136th Pl and also includes the 130th Ave Station.
- E360 consists of track within Bellevue and continues into Redmond and the Overlake Village Station.

Construction is scheduled to begin in late 2015, most likely on the E330 (downtown tunnel) segment. Eastlink is expected to begin service in 2023.

You can view an animation of the entire link here: http://www.soundtransit.org/Projects-and-Plans/East-Link-Extension/East-Link-Extension-document-archive/Videos-2014-animations.



For more information about East Link, visit the Sound Transit East Link project page at: http://www.soundtransit.org/Projects-and-Plans/East-Link-Extension

Marijuana producers, processors and retailers open in Bellevue



I-502 passed in a public vote in November of 2012 and became a national news story. For the Bellevue Fire Department, the initial conversation for many was how to handle potential use, by our members, of this formerly illegal drug. The conversation for Fire Prevention quickly turned to how these brand new businesses fit into the existing codes adopted by Bellevue.



By February, the race was on for potential I-502 business owners to find and lease a location and competition was fierce for the limited number of spaces available that fit zoning regulations. Development Services worked quickly to classify the type of occupancy to use. Retail stores are a "B" occupancy; production/processing facilities are an "F1" occupancy. This then drives the applicable Building Codes that are used for construction of these businesses. We generally treat these establishments as any other business except for some specialized equipment that is unique to the production and processing side.



Carbon Dioxide (CO²) enrichment can be used on the production side to promote faster growth during some cycles of a plant's life. Plant extraction systems are used during the processing phase and are designed to force concentrated oil from the plant. These systems can involve the use of additives as benign as cold water or as volatile as butane. Interpretations and procedures have been created to address the fire and life safety issues that are now present in our jurisdiction. The legal marijuana business is dynamic and our codes will continue to adapt as the industry evolves.

The use of Carbon Dioxide (CO²) as an additive in beverages dates back to 1767. In many drinking and dining establishments, Carbon Dioxide has been added to flavored water on site, delivered from pressurized containers. For high-volume establishments, this has meant the carbon dioxide containers must be replaced frequently. In response, industry has been providing containers of liquid Carbon Dioxide that provides significantly more (CO²) in essentially the same size or smaller container. Instead of changing the containers daily, they can be changed out weekly or even at longer frequencies.

On May 31, 2011, the Phoenix Fire Department had a "near miss" that was a result of a leaky Carbon Dioxide (CO²) dispensing system in a fast food restaurant. The leaking Carbon Dioxide displaced oxygen in the basement of the restaurant creating an oxygendeficient atmosphere that was nearly lethal to restaurant employees and responding firefighters (reenactment video).

The 2015 International Fire Code contains new requirements when carbon dioxide systems, using more than 100 lbs of carbon dioxide, are used in beverage dispensing. The following apply to both new and existing systems:

- 1. An Operational Permit is required
- 2. Pressure relief valves are required on insulated liquid CO² systems
- 3. Storage tanks, cylinders, piping and fittings must be protected from damage by occupants or equipment

- 4. When systems (tanks, cylinders, piping and/or equipment) are located indoors, either:
 - A. Mechanical Ventilation not less than 1 cfm/sf
 - Exhaust taken from a point within 12" of the floor
 - Ventilation designed to operate at a negative pressure in relation to the surrounding area OR
 - B. Emergency Alarm System
 - Continuous gas detection to monitor areas where carbon dioxide can accumulate
 - Threshold for alarm activation not to exceed 5,000 parts per million
 - Activation of alarm shall initiate a local alarm within the room or area where the system is installed
- 5. A warning sign shall be posted at the entrance to the building, room, enclosure, or confined area where the container is located. The warning sign shall be at least 8 inches wide and 6 inches high and include the verbiage listed below:

For additional information:

- International Fire Code (2015) Section 5307
- National Fire Protection Association Standard 55, Ch 13
- Phoenix Fire Dept Carbonated Beverage System web page
- Compressed Gas Association Safety Alert SA-22 2011

Bellevue Fire Prevention Division Directory	
NANNETTE HEYE (GENERAL INFORMATION)	425-452-6872
Fire Prevention Plan Review (General Plan Review Questions)	425-452-4122
Fire Prevention Construction Inspections (New Construction Inspections)	425-452-4254
Fire/Life Safety Systems Impairments (impairmentnotification@bellevuewa.gov)	425-452-6872
Construction Inspection Requests (www.mybuildingpermit.com)IVR Lir	ne: 425-452-6875
Fire Prevention	
Ken Carlson, Fire Marshal	425-452-6874
Rich Burke, Public Information Officer	425-452-6995
Fire Prevention—Plan Review & Construction Inspection	
FireReview@bellevuewa.gov (General Plan Review Questions)	ext. 4122
FireConstructionInsp@bellevuewa.gov (New Construction Inspections)	
Travis Ripley, Assistant Fire Marshal-Plans Review	425-452-6042
Adrian Jones, Fire Plan Reviewer	425-452-6032
Kevin Carolan, Fire Prevention Officer	425-452-7832
Sean Nichols, Fire Prevention Officer	
Open position, Fire Prevention Officer	425-452-xxxx
Fire Prevention—Inspection Staff	
Steve Swarthout, Assistant Fire Marshal	
Scott Gerard, Fire Prevention Officer	425-452-6808
Steve Sexton, Fire Prevention Officer	425-452-2803
Matt Nienaber, Fire Prevention Officer	425-452-4376
Dennis Warner, Fire Prevention Officer	425-452-6011
Chris Spurlock, Fire Prevention Officer	425-452-4256
Brooke Robinson, Fire Prevention Officer	
Hugo Sotelo, Fire Prevention Officer	425-452-6034

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

