



UPCOMING

APRIL

- 1ST April Fools
- 5th Easter
- 14th Board Meeting
- 15th Tax Day
- 22nd Earth Day

MAY

- 5th Cinco de Mayo
- 10th Mothers Day
- 10th Mothers Day Breakfast
- 12th Board Meeting
- 14th Budget Meeting
- 16th Pet Parade
- 25th Memorial Day

JUNE

- 9th Board Meeting
- 19th Juneteenth
- 21st Fathers Day

JULY

- 4th Independence Day
- 14th Board Meeting

AUGUST

- 7th – 9th Homer Davenport Days
- 11th Board Meeting

SEPTEMBER

- 7th Labor Day
- 8th Board Meeting
- 23rd First Day of Fall

FIRE CHIEF'S MESSAGE – SPRING 2026

As we welcome spring to Silverton, I want to extend my sincere appreciation to our residents for your continued support of the Silverton Fire District. This time of year brings renewed energy to our community, and it's a great opportunity to focus on safety, preparedness, and connection.

Since the beginning of the new year, our crews have remained busy responding to approximately 250 calls for service, including emergency medical incidents, fire responses, and public assists. These numbers reflect both the growing needs of our community and the dedication of our firefighters and volunteers who are ready to respond 25 hours a day.

With warmer and drier conditions approaching, we ask everyone to be especially mindful of outdoor burning and fire safety. Spring yard cleanup can increase the risk of brush fires. Please follow all local burn regulations, keep a water source nearby, and never leave fires unattended. Small precautions can prevent large emergencies.

This season is also an ideal time to check your home safety systems. Test your smoke alarms, replace batteries, and review your family's emergency plan. If you need assistance or have questions, our firefighters are always here to help.

We're proud to continue offering programs such as Smoke Alarm Installation/ Maintenance Assistance, and Wildfire Preparedness/Home Assessments. These programs are designed to keep our community informed, prepared, and resilient.

It is an honor to serve as your Fire Chief. On behalf of the entire Silverton Fire District, thank you for your trust and partnership. We are committed to keeping Silverton safe and strong.

Stay safe and enjoy the spring and summer seasons!

Sincerely,

Bill Miles

Fire Chief, Silverton Fire District



2026 REGIONAL TRAINING ACADEMY

Since January, the Silverton Regional Training Academy has been underway, preparing the next generation of responders through a rigorous Firefighter 1 and Support Services program. This year's academy includes seven members from Silverton Fire District, one member from Marion County Fire District, and one individual training in a Support Services role—reflecting a strong regional partnership and shared commitment to public safety.

Over the course of the academy, recruits completed a comprehensive, standards-based curriculum combining both classroom instruction and hands-on training. Key focus areas included search and rescue operations, building construction and fire behavior, hazardous materials awareness and operations, and live fire training. Each component is designed to ensure recruits can operate safely, effectively, and as part of a coordinated team in high-risk, real-world environments.

In addition to fireground training, participants reviewed emergency medical service protocols and earned CPR and Basic Life Support (BLS) certifications. This reinforces the role of today's firefighters as dual-trained responders, capable of providing both fire suppression and critical medical care when it matters most. The academy emphasizes not only technical proficiency, but also decision-making, teamwork, and resilience under pressure.

The academy will conclude with graduation in April, at which point these individuals will transition into active response roles within their departments. Their commitment represents a significant investment in the safety and resilience of the Silverton community and surrounding areas. We are proud to welcome them to the ranks and grateful for their dedication to serving others.

READY FOR THE CALL

This spring, our crews have been all about staying sharp on one of the most important skills we carry—high-quality CPR and handling cardiac arrests. These calls don't happen every day, but when they do, every second matters. That's why our team has spent extra time running hands-on scenarios that really test how we respond in the moment.

We've practiced in all kinds of situations, including tight or hard-to-reach spots, where space, access, and time make a big difference. Crews worked on moving patients safely, keeping CPR going without missing a beat, and brushing up on the smaller details—reading vitals, using our AutoPulse, and making sure communication on scene is clear.



We were lucky to have our new Medical Director join one of these nights. She didn't just watch—she jumped into the scenarios with us, giving hands-on coaching and real-time feedback. She also shared what's happening inside a patient during cardiac arrest and what care looks like once they reach the hospital. That perspective really helps our crews see how what we do in those first critical minutes matters.

This kind of ongoing training makes sure that when our community needs us, we're ready—not just to show up, but to give the best care we can.

BEFORE THE FIRST SPARK

While many of us think about fire season in the late summer months – when temperatures are high and rainfall is scarce – meaningful preparation begins long before the first red flag warning. Spring is the time to act. As you begin your annual yard cleanup, take a careful look at your property and identify potential wildfire hazards before dry conditions set in.

What is defensible space and why does it matter? Defensible space is the area around your home or business, including nearby grass, trees, shrubs, outbuildings, and adjacent wildland. When properly maintained, this space acts as a buffer that slows or stops the spread of fire. Keeping it clear of tall grass, overgrown vegetation, and accumulated debris not only improves the chances of your structure surviving a wildfire, but also creates safer conditions for firefighters working to protect your property.

Not sure what you're looking for? Silverton Fire District offers Defensible Space Surveys. One of our firefighters will come out and help assess your property, offering suggestions and ideas on how to improve your space. For more information or to schedule a survey, please visit [Defensible Space Assessment Request](#) on the Silverton Fire website.

A DEEP DIVE INTO THE IMMEDIATE ZONE OF DEFENSIBLE SPACE

What is the immediate zone? And why does it matter? The immediate zone is the area within 0-5 feet of your home – and it is one of the most important factors in determining whether a structure survives a wildfire. This small space serves as your home's first line of defense. Spring is the ideal time to focus on it, before summer heat, dry vegetation, and seasonal fire restrictions make mitigation work more challenging.

During a wildfire, homes are rarely lost to a dramatic wall of flames. Instead, they often ignite from wind-driven embers that can travel miles ahead of the main fire. These embers settle in vulnerable areas such as along fences, under decks, near vents and doorways, and at the base of exterior walls. If combustible materials are present in this immediate area, embers can quickly ignite them and spread fire to the structure. Maintaining a clean, noncombustible buffer within the first five feet significantly reduces this risk.

A FEW FIRE RESISTANT PLANTS

Evergreen Shrub
CAROL MACKIE
A real head-turner with variegated leaves and a bloom that's to die for.
Likes: Full sun/part shade, moderate water needs. Deer resistant.



Perennial
CRONEFLOWER
A perennial herb with a sweet attitude. Daisy like flower, looks good in any color.
Likes: Full sun, low water needs, deer resistant, butterfly lover.




Deciduous Tree
CRABAPPLE
Looks good in any color, rose, pink, red or white. Lovely foliage and puts on a show in the fall.
Likes: Full sun/part shade, low water needs. Bird and butterfly friendly.



Deciduous Shrub
MOCKORANGE
Pretty in white. This fire-resistant plant has sweet smelling white flowers, with a green leaf that will leave them speechless.
Likes: Full sun/part shade, moderate water needs.



Conifer Tree
PONDEROSA PINE
Statement piece with long green needles & a cinnamon brown bark.
Likes: Full sun, low water needs. Deer resistant.



Perennial
SALVIA
Perennial herb with a shrub-like growth habit. Sperry look with a dash of fun.
Likes: Full sun/part shade, low water needs.



THINGS TO CONSIDER IN THE IMMEDIATE ZONE

In this immediate zone, remove or relocate:

- Bark dust and wood mulch
- Dry grass, weeds, and leaf litter
- Shrubs or dense vegetation touching walls or decks
- Decorative items made of wood or other flammable materials

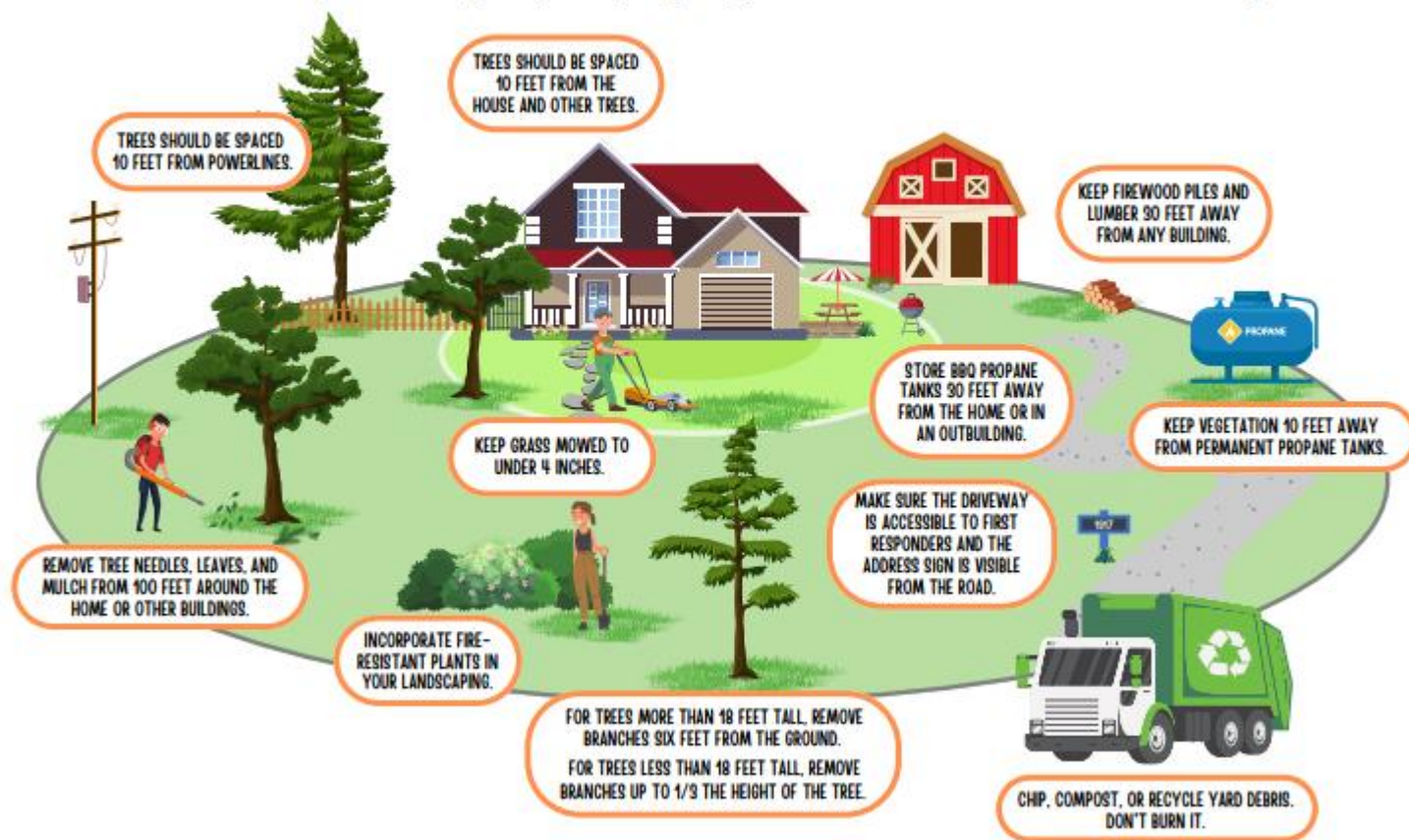
Instead, consider:

- Gravel, stone, or concrete ground cover
- Pavers or walkways
- Well-maintained, fire-resistant plants with proper spacing
- Clean, open areas that prevent embers from collecting

These improvements don't require major landscaping, but they can make a life-saving difference. Pay special attention to decks, stairs, fences, and pergolas, where embers can collect and ignite hidden spaces.

DON'T GIVE EMBERS A PLACE TO CALL HOME.

Create **defensible space** and give your property an increased chance of surviving a wildfire.



FIRE PREVENTION

LET'S TALK S'MORE ABOUT FIRES

What's better than a s'more over a campfire on a hot summer day?! Before you have that campfire, here's a few things to consider.

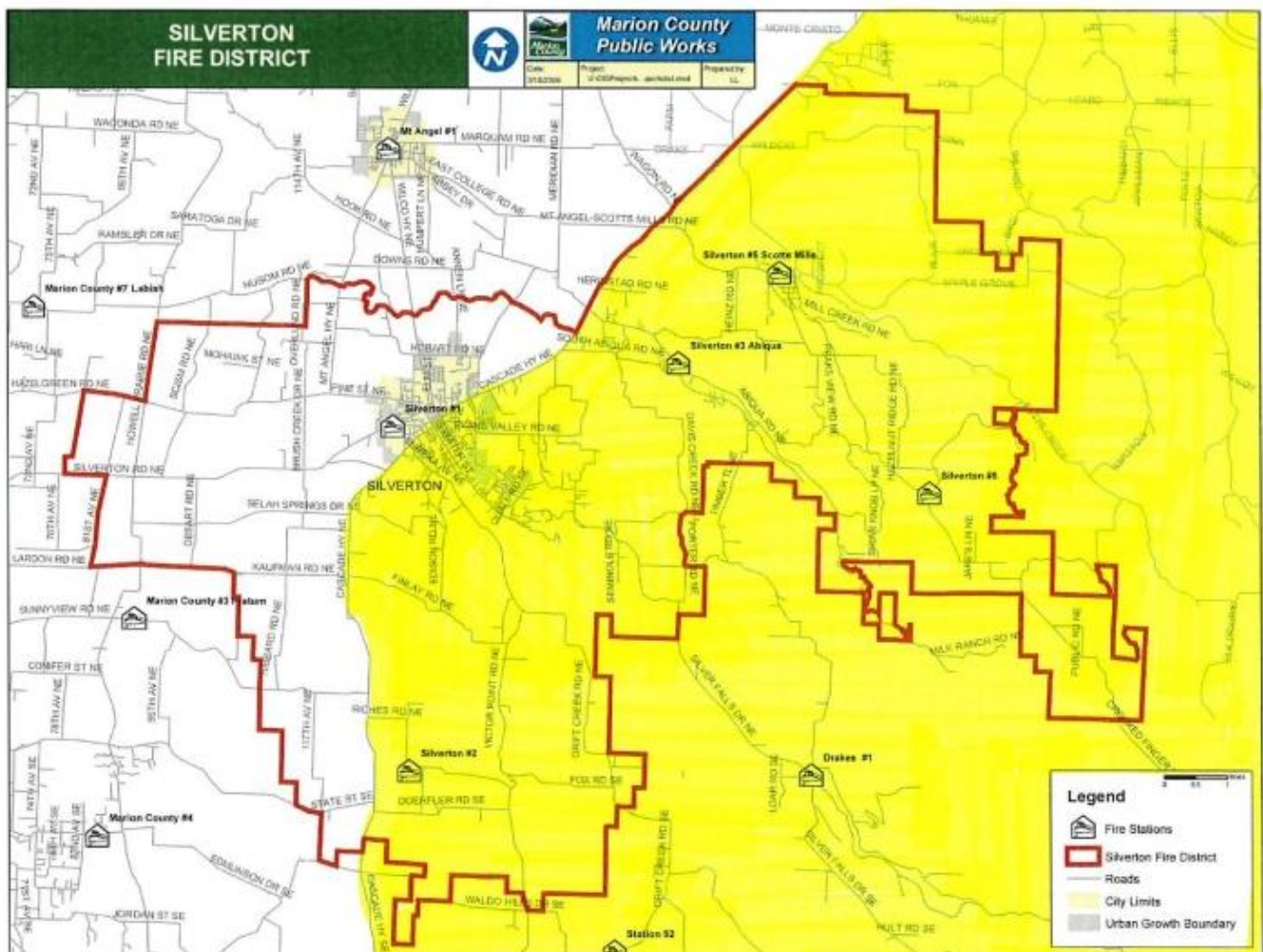
Who can have a campfire? If the campfire is no more than 2 feet across and 3 feet tall, anyone can have a camp fire. This is considered a warming fire.

What can I burn in my campfire? Clean firewood. This isn't meant to burn yard debris, construction material, or garbage.

When can I have a campfire? Check in with Silverton Fire District if you have questions about when you can have a campfire. Sometimes, there are burning restrictions because of the weather.

Where can I have a campfire? Campfires should be in a designated area clear of debris that could cause the fire to spread. There should be a water source and a shovel to help extinguish the fire. If your property falls in ODF territory (see below map), you might need to reach out to get a campfire permit. It's free and painless, ODF will inspect your campfire area and make sure you're safe!

Why do I see Oregon Department of Forestry responding to fires in the Silverton Fire District? ODF assists with patrolling and responding to calls East of HWY 213. Silverton Fire District is still the primary response, but having an extra set of helping hands in rural areas is always appreciated!



IS THAT SMOKE I SEE IN THE HILLS??

The Willamette Valley is known for its charming towns, scenic drives, waterfalls, and rolling hills. What many people may not realize is that those hills also support world renowned grass seed and cereal crop production – an important part of our local economy and agricultural heritage.

Beginning in late June, you may notice smoke rising from fields throughout the valley. These are permitted agricultural field burns. Field burning is required for seed production and helps control weeds, pests, and plant diseases, supporting healthy crop production for the next season.

This activity is closely regulated by the Oregon Department of Agriculture and monitored by Department of Environmental Quality. Growers must obtain permits, prepare fields in advance, and follow strict requirements regarding weather conditions and timing before any burning can occur.

If you're driving through the hills, a plume of smoke can understandably be concerning – especially during the summer months. Here are a few general characteristics of permitted field burns:

- Smoke often begins darker at ground level
- The smoke typically rises in a single, vertical column
- As it ascends, the smoke lightens to gray

In contrast, smoke from unregulated or wildfire often remains darker, spreads irregularly, and does not form a consistent vertical column.

If you'd like to learn more about field burning in the Willamette Valley, [Oregon Department of Agriculture](#) provides helpful information about its history, regulations, and contact information for questions or concerns.

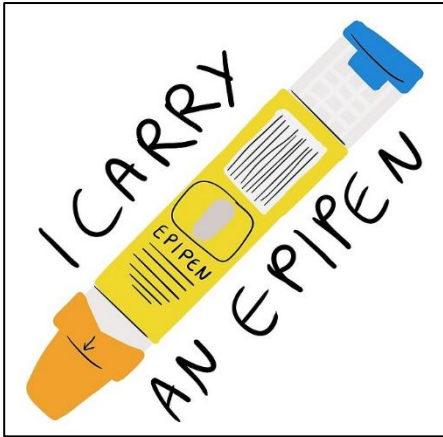
As always, if you believe you are witnessing an emergency, please call 911.



YOU BETTER BEE READY!

There's something about spring turning into summer that just feels good; longer days, warmer evenings, and finally soaking up some sunshine! With all that fresh air and blooming landscape, though, comes one not-so-glamorous guest: allergy season.

For many of us, seasonal allergies mean the usual suspects – sneezing, itchy eyes, congestion, scratchy throats, and fatigue. But there's another side to allergies we don't talk about as often: the severe, life-threatening kind.



Stings from bees, wasps or hornets, as well as certain foods like peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, dairy, and others, can trigger anaphylaxis. Anaphylactic reactions can escalate quickly and may include swelling of the throat, difficulty breathing, hives, vomiting, dizziness, or a sudden drop in blood pressure. This is a medical emergency.

Spring and summer mean more time outdoors, more gatherings, more shared meals. This makes it especially important to have conversations with friends and family about known allergies. If someone carries an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen), make sure you know where it is and how to use it. If you or your child has a severe allergy, ensure that prescribed epinephrine is readily accessible – not left in a car or at home.

If someone is experiencing anaphylaxis:

1. **Call 911 immediately.** Don't wait to see if symptoms improve.
2. **Locate their epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen).**
3. **Assist with administering the epinephrine.**
4. **Keep the used auto-injector and provide it to responding medical personnel.**

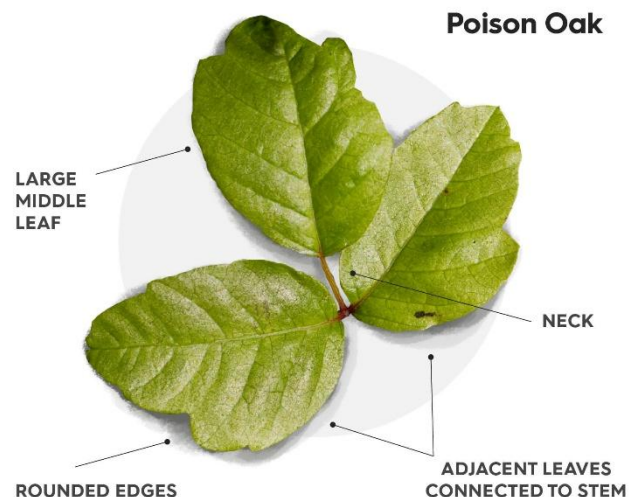
Even if symptoms improve after epinephrine is given, emergency evaluation is still necessary.

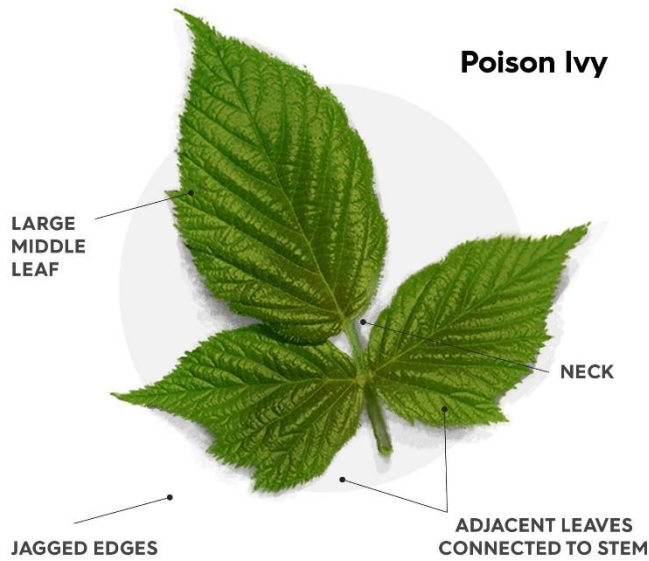
Enjoy the sunshine. Enjoy the season. Just make sure we know where our EpiPens are!

LEAVES OF THREE, STAY AWAY FROM ME

Spring and summer in the Willamette valley mean hiking trails, yard projects, fence repairs, and kids exploring every corner of the outdoors. Unfortunately, it's also prime season for two plants that can make that outdoor time miserable: Poison Oak and Poison Ivy.

A helpful reminder: **"Leaves of three, let it be."** Both plants typically grow in clusters of three leaflets and can appear as shrubs, vines or ground cover. Leaves may be green in spring and summer, and turn red or orange in the fall.





The rash caused by these plants comes from an oily substance called urushiol. It can stick to skin, clothing, tools, and even pet fur. The rash may not appear right away – symptoms can develop 12-48 hours after exposure and may include redness, itching, swelling and blistering.

A few quick tips if you think you've been exposed:

- Wash skin with soap and cool water as soon as possible.
- Remove and wash clothing separately.
- Clean tools and gear that may have come into contact with the plant.
- Bathe pets if they've been running through brush.

Seek medical care if the rash involves the face or eyes, covers a large portion of the body, shows signs of infection, or causes significant swelling.

A QUICK NOTE ABOUT WATER

Warm weather means it's officially river, lake, and pool season. Sunshine, floaties, paddleboards, and long afternoons near the water are some of the best parts of spring and summer. Before heading out, though, it's worth remembering that our local waterways can still be colder and faster-moving than they look.

Even on a hot day, river water can be surprisingly cold. That quick jump in can take your breath away and make muscles feel tired faster than expected. Add in currents, uneven footing, or distractions, and it's easy to see how situations can change quickly. Keeping a close eye on kids – and designating a “water watcher” during group outings – makes a big difference.

And yes, life jackets are still cool! Whether you're floating, kayaking, or paddleboarding, wearing a properly fitted life jacket adds an extra layer of protection without taking away from the fun. They're especially important for children and anyone who isn't a strong swimmer.

A little preparation goes a long way: check conditions before you go and make a plan for where you'll enter and exit the water. Spring and summer are meant to be enjoyed – and with a few simple precautions, you can make sure the memories you bring home are the good ones.

