

**EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION #4—FIREFIGHTING**

**LEAD AGENCIES**

Fire Departments and Fire Protection Districts in Pierce County:

Anderson Island Fire & Rescue (No. 27)  
Browns Point Fire & Rescue (No. 13)  
Carbonado Fire Department  
Central Pierce Fire & Rescue (No. 6)  
City of Buckley Fire Department  
City of DuPont Fire Department  
City of Ruston Fire Department  
City of Tacoma Fire Department  
Crystal Mountain Fire & Rescue (No. 25)  
East Pierce Fire & Rescue (No. 22)  
Gig Harbor Fire & Rescue (No. 5)  
Graham Fire & Rescue (No. 21)  
Greenwater Fire & Rescue (No. 26)  
Joint Base Lewis-McChord  
Key Peninsula Fire (No. 16)  
Orting Valley Fire & Rescue (No. 18)  
Pierce 23 Fire & Rescue (No. 23)  
Riverside Fire & Rescue (No. 14)  
South Pierce Fire & Rescue (No. 17)  
West Pierce Fire & Rescue (No. 3)

**SUPPORT AGENCIES**

South Sound 9-1-1 and other Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) in Pierce County  
Pierce County Department of Emergency Management-Fire Prevention Bureau

**STATE AND FEDERAL LEADS**

Washington State Patrol-Fire Marshal's Office  
Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR)  
U.S. Department of Agriculture-Forest Service

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Emergency Support Function (ESF) #4 focuses on wildland, structural, marine, and shipboard fire suppression related topics, capabilities, and responsibilities within Pierce County. The fire service in Pierce County provides a number of other “specialty” services that may be covered in more detail in other ESFs, such as ESF #8—Public Health and Medical Services, ESF #9—Search and Rescue, and ESF #10—Oil and Hazardous Materials Response. Fire agencies in the region provide basic life support (BLS) and some advanced life support (ALS), varying levels of hazardous materials response capability, marine firefighting capabilities, swift water rescue, confined space rescue, dive teams, collapsed structure rescue, and other services outside the traditional firefighter role.

**A. Purpose**

1. To coordinate public fire services in cooperation with the fire departments and fire districts within Pierce County.

2. To support detection, management, and suppression of wildland, rural, and urban fires resulting from, or occurring co-incidentally with an emergency or major disaster.

**B. Scope**

1. For the purpose of this ESF, fire service is considered fire suppression and control. Although the fire service provides other functions such as; emergency medical care, immediate life safety services, search and rescue and hazardous material response, those functions are not included in this ESF.
2. Fire service in Pierce County is provided by various agencies including fire protection districts, municipal fire departments, and privately-owned fire resources, along with state and federal agencies.
3. This ESF does not address the mobilization of fire resources at regional or state levels. Pierce County Fire Resource Plan, the South Puget Sound Fire Defense Board Plan, and the Washington Fire Service Resource Mobilization Plan (all published separately) provide detailed information on mobilization procedures. Triggers for activating these plans are discussed below.
4. Planning for every firefighting contingency is far beyond the scope of this ESF. This plan will outline broad objectives that will provide for the greatest protection of life and property that can be achieved with resources available. This ESF should be used as a guideline for those in command of fire service operations and should not be viewed as a prescribed action plan.
5. Marine firefighting includes fighting fires from fireboats and from land, piers or docks and includes combating fire incidents involving vessels, piers, docks, boat houses, and other marina type situations.
6. Shipboard firefighting includes the boarding of a vessel to conduct fire suppression activities. This requires specialized training on fire controls systems on vessels, unique hazards associated with confined spaces and vessel design.

**C. Core Capabilities and Actions**

The following table lists the core capabilities that ESF #4 most directly supports along with the related ESF #4 actions. In addition to the core capabilities listed in the table, all ESFs support the following core capabilities: Planning, Operational Coordination, and Public Information and Warning.

<b>Mission Area</b>	<b>Core Capability</b>	<b>Description and Actions</b>
Response	Situational Assessment	1. Conduct an initial fire situation and damage assessment; determines the appropriate management response to meet the request for assistance.

**PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

<b>Mission Area</b>	<b>Core Capability</b>	<b>Description and Actions</b>
Response <i>(continued)</i>	Fire Management and Suppression	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide wildland, wildland-urban interface (WUI) and structure firefighting resources to municipal, county, or tribal agencies in support of firefighting and emergency operations.</li> <li>2. Provide command, control, and coordination of resources to municipal, county, or tribal agencies in support of firefighting and emergency operations.</li> <li>3. Provide direct liaison with municipal, county, or tribal, emergency operations centers (EOCs) and fire chiefs in the designated area, as appropriate.</li> </ol>

**II. POLICIES**

- A. Priority is given to firefighter and public safety.
- B. NIMS/ICS are used to manage emergency and major disaster operations.
- C. Firefighting guidelines and procedures will align with the Northwest Interagency Coordination Center (NWCC).
- D. The Tacoma-Pierce County Chaplaincy (T-PCC) will provide defusing and debriefings and personal or interpersonal support for fire personnel and their families, when requested by their respective agency (see ESF #6).
- E. Fire service mutual/automatic aid will be exhausted or nearly exhausted prior to requesting regional or state fire mobilization resources, South Puget Sound Fire Mobilization Defense Plan.
- F. Each local, state, or federal agency will assume the full cost of protection of the lands within its respective boundaries unless other arrangements are made. Fire protection agencies should not incur costs in jurisdictions outside their area without reimbursement unless there is a local mutual aid agreement between those jurisdictions. It is essential that the issue of financial limitation be clarified through proper official channels for efficient delivery of fire services.
- G. Coordination with and support of state and local fire suppression organizations is accomplished through the state fire marshal, WMD-EMD, or other appropriate fire suppression organizations operating under NIMS/ICS.
- H. National support for local and state firefighting operations is coordinated through the National Interagency Coordinating Center (NICC) located at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise, Idaho. This is coordinated among the State Fire Marshal or WMD-EMD and the Joint Field Office (JFO).

- I. Wildland fire operations will adhere to NWCC protocols and standards.

### III. SITUATION

#### A. Emergency/Major Disaster Conditions and Hazards

A wide range of fire situations exist in Pierce County. There is a potential for large commercial structure, high-rise, wildland, wildland-urban interface, hazardous materials, and shipboard fires as referenced in the Pierce County Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (HIRA—published separately). A conflagration could develop from natural or human caused situation(s) that will impact the response of fire resources in the county. Large-scale or multiple simultaneous events could also impact the availability of fire resources.

#### B. Planning Assumptions

- Fires can be the primary hazard or consequence of an emergency or major disaster such as an earthquake or a civil disturbance or terrorist attack.
- Larger scale or multiple simultaneous incidents will impact the number of available fire and rescue resources, which may become scarce or damaged.
- Some wildland-urban interface fires or other fires resulting from civil disturbances or terrorist activity will be of such magnitude that all threatened structures cannot be saved. After evaluating the situation, incident command may decide to cease firefighting efforts on one building in order to save another when the benefit of saving one building is greater than that of another, when continued efforts would likely not affect the outcome, or firefighter safety concerns.
- Damage to transportation infrastructure and to fire facilities may impact the ability of fire services to respond to the emergency or major disaster.
- Availability of fire service personnel may be limited due to injury, personal concerns/needs, or limited access to work locations and assigned to initial first response for all emergencies.
- Fire service personnel and resources for fire suppression and control may be limited during disasters due to multiple functions the fire service providers, such as: emergency medical care, immediate life safety services, search and rescue and hazardous material response.

### IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

#### A. General

1. During emergencies or major disasters, local fire services will mobilize all available apparatus and personnel available to manage the incident. Mutual aid agreements are activated when initial resources are inadequate. When mutual aid and local

resources are exhausted or nearly exhausted, the provisions for regional and state fire mobilization apply.

2. Where local and/or regional fire resources and mutual aid have been or are expected to be exhausted and the incident is expected to continue for multiple operational periods, the Fire Coordinator may request state fire mobilization.
3. Fire mobilization process:
  - a. Local fire agency capability/capacity is or is expected to be exceeded.
  - b. A request for assistance is made to the Regional Fire Coordinator.
  - c. The Regional Fire Coordinator may seek resources within the region if kind and type are known to be available.
  - d. If the needed resources are not available within the region, the Regional Fire Coordinator makes a request to the WMD-EMD Duty Officer or the Logistics Section of the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) if it has been activated.
  - e. WMD-EMD forwards the request to the fire marshal's office where it is conveyed to the Chief of the State Patrol where it is approved or denied.
  - f. Correspondence is made back to the Regional Fire Coordinator and resources if approved are sought and dispatched.
  - g. Reimbursement rates are set by the state fire chief's association by resource kind and type.
  - h. The event will exceed 12 hours in duration.
4. When activated, the Pierce County Fire Resource Plan will designate a fire coordinator for overall coordination of fire service resources. The fire coordinator may operate from a field command post or the Tacoma-Pierce County Emergency Operations Center (EOC)—hereafter called the "EOC"—as necessary. County and municipal fire departments will report available resources and request resources through the Pierce County fire coordinator as directed.
5. Upon occurrence of an emergency or major disaster, such as an earthquake, fire departments within the county are to make initial assessments of their personnel, apparatus, equipment, and facilities and report the information to their designated communication center.
6. State agencies such as Washington State Patrol and Department of Transportation support fire operations when the fire impacts state highways.
7. The federal government assumes full responsibility for firefighting on national forest system lands and joins unified command with the local jurisdictions on incidents that threaten national forest system lands.
8. Any incident involving military resources outside of a military installation, local fire may or may not assist depending on national security protocols.

- B. Mitigation Mission
  - 1. Agencies mitigate fire hazards through implementing fire prevention programs such as CERTS, inspections, code enforcements, outreach, and juvenile fire center programs.
  
- C. Response Mission
  - 1. The Pierce County Fire Chiefs Association (PCFCA) Emergency Management Committee (Fire Resource Coordinator and Zone Coordinators) is responsible for emergency resource and response planning within fire services and maintaining the Pierce County Fire Resource Plan (PCFRP). The PCFRP will be utilized for assessing, requesting, and directing fire resources.
  - 2. Maintain readiness of firefighting personnel and equipment resources.
  
- D. Recovery Mission
  - 1. Conduct windshield surveys and provide information to appropriate PSAP or EOC.

**V. RESPONSIBILITIES**

<b>Lead Agencies</b>	<b>ESF Responsibilities</b>
Fire Departments and Fire Protection Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide fire suppression and immediate life safety services.</li> <li>2. Conduct light and heavy rescue operations as appropriate to level of training and available equipment.</li> <li>3. Conduct fire investigation activities within respective jurisdictions or in conjunction with the Pierce County Fire Marshal.</li> <li>4. Staff the EOC with a fire coordinator when indicated or requested.</li> </ul>

<b>Support Agencies</b>	<b>ESF Responsibilities</b>
South Sound 9-1-1 other Public Safety Answering Points (Tacoma and JBLM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain adequate staffing and operational status in support of fire resource dispatch responsibilities.</li> <li>2. Break out each fire dispatch for area it covers.</li> </ul>
Pierce County Department of Emergency Management-Fire Prevention Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct fire investigations in support of, or independent of, county fire districts.</li> <li>2. Enforce the provisions of legally adopted fire codes.</li> <li>3. Assist fire districts/departments in fire prevention planning.</li> </ul>

**PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

<b>State and Federal Leads</b>	<b>ESF Responsibilities</b>
Washington State Patrol-Fire Marshal's Office	1. Obtain necessary resources through interagency agreements when Washington State Fire Service Resource Mobilization Plan is activated.
Washington State Department of Natural Resources	1. Manages and coordinates wildland firefighting activities on DNR protected lands. 2. Provide and coordinate firefighting assistance to other land management organizations and to local jurisdiction fire organizations, as requested, under the terms of existing agreements and department policies and procedures.
U.S. Department of Agriculture-Forest Service	1. Assumes full responsibility for suppression of wildfires burning on National Forest System lands and joins in a unified command with the local jurisdiction on incidents threatening National Forest System lands. 2. Provides and coordinates firefighting assistance to other Federal land management; state forestry; and local, tribal, territorial, and insular area fire organizations as requested under the terms of existing agreements and the National Response Framework (NRF).

**VI. AREAS OF COORDINATION CROSSWALK**

The following table describes the typical functions concurrently active during incidents involving ESF #4. Other ESF annexes are listed as a reference to guide coordination.

<b>Function</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>ESF Annex</b>
Crowd control and criminal investigations	Pierce County Sheriff's Department	ESF #13
Sheltering	Pierce County DEM/Red Cross	ESF #6
Feeding/hydration	Salvation Army	ESF #6
Alert and Warning	Pierce County DEM	ESF #5
Emotional/spiritual support/stress management for first responders	Tacoma PC Chaplaincy	ESF #6
Hazardous Materials Response	PCHIT/WA Ecology	ESF #10
Public Information	Pierce County Communications Department	ESF #15
Urban Search & Rescue	Pierce County Sheriff's Department	ESF #9

**VII. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES**

- Pierce County Emergency Medical Services and the Emergency Medical Program Director Patient Care Protocols.
- Pierce County Fire Service Emergency Resource Plan.
- South Puget Sound Regional Fire Defense Plan.
- Washington State Fire Services Resource Mobilization Plan.

**VIII. TERMS AND DEFINITONS**

- Pierce County Fire Resource Plan (p. 2)
- South Puget Sound Fire Defense Board Plan (p. 2)
- Washington Fire Service Resource Mobilization Plan (p. 2)
- Core capabilities (p. 2)
- Northwest Interagency Coordination Center (p. 3)
- WMD-EMD (p. 3)
- National Interagency Coordination Center (p. 3)
- National Interagency Fire Center (p. 3)
- Joint Field Office (p. 3)
- Wildland-urban interface (p. 3)
- HIRA (p. 3)
- Conflagration (p. 3)
- Fire Coordinator (p. 4)
- Regional Fire Coordinator (p. 4, South Puget Sound: King, Pierce, Kitsap, Mason)
- Apparatus (p. 4)

**IX. ATTACHMENTS**

- Pierce County Fire Management Zone Map