



**ORCAS ISLAND FIRE & RESCUE**

SAN JUAN  
COUNTY FIRE  
PROTECTION  
DISTRICT # 2

## FIRE CHIEF

Starting Salary: \$85,000 to \$95,000  
DOQ with excellent benefits



## **Orcas Island Fire & Rescue**

Neighbors Serving Neighbors Since 1948

### **The Position**

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Orcas Island Fire and Rescue is looking for candidates for the position of Fire Chief who are fire service professionals with excellent executive leadership skills and a comprehensive knowledge of all aspects of the fire service and EMS. The ideal candidate will have experience serving in a combination District, working with a Board of Fire Commissioners to build achievable goals, and implementing operating and capital budgets.

Strong written and oral communication skills are vitally important to this position. The Fire District has a longstanding relationship with Orcas Island residents who will want to know if the new Fire Chief has a vested interest in the District and the community overall. The successful candidate must value community involvement and be comfortable participating in community events. Understanding the unique challenges that accompany living on an island is also very important.

Our new Fire Chief must be knowledgeable (preferably through experience) about all aspects of the position as they relate to operations and administration. This individual needs to understand the role as Chief Executive Officer and balance the position as an employee of the Board of Fire Commissioners with that of being head of the staff and a liaison to the community. The ideal candidate will have experience working with volunteers and will have the

ability to maintain a cohesive combination fire agency. The new Chief must be well acquainted with labor laws in the State of Washington. A proven track record showing success working with unions and building positive labor/management relationships will be important.

The new Chief will possess strong leadership skills in guiding and mentoring career, volunteer, and administrative staff. This person will lead by example by setting a standard for the District members and must have a strong, confident presence, along with being a good listener, encouraging accessibility, and maintaining close and consistent communication with staff. The candidate will create a positive working environment characterized by respect and teamwork.

The new Chief will need to be skilled in strategic thinking and planning with the ability to communicate to all stakeholders and lead the District with intelligence and inspiration.

### **The District**

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Established in 1948, San Juan County Fire Protection District #2 provides outstanding response to incidents involving fire, emergency medical services (BLS and ALS), motor vehicle and boating accidents, hazardous materials, and public education programs. While OIFR provides fire suppression services, the emphasis of the



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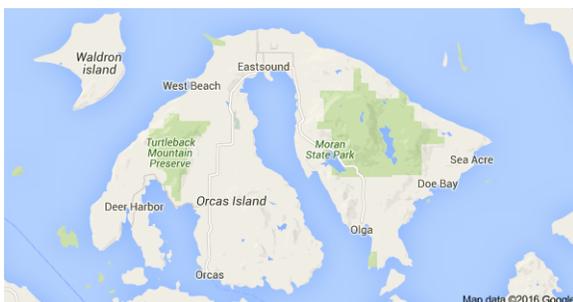
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District is upon emergency medical responses to acute illness or trauma. Nearly 70 % of all calls are medical in nature.



Additionally, OIFR provides Technical Rescue (vehicle extraction, Search and Rescue, Technical Rope Rescue); Wildland response; and the newly formed Marine Rescue and Transportation Services (MRATS).

The District has seen a steady increase in call volume. In 1996, OIFR responded to approximately 350 calls; in 2007, call volume rose to over 600 calls; in 2015, OIFR reached 1120 calls with 35 % concurrent or overlapping calls.



The District's response area is Orcas Island which is approximately 55 square miles and categorized as rural. The topography of the island is the most diverse of the San Juans with elevations from sea level to 2,409 feet.

The District serves a permanent population of about 5,500 people with a summer population of about 12,000 people.

A publicly elected three-person Board of Fire Commissioners, each serving a six-year term on a rotating basis, governs the District. Funded primarily by property taxes, the assessed value of the District is around \$2 billion.

In 2015, the District responded to 775 EMS calls and 345 fire calls, including 225 transports by a helicopter or fixed wing plane to mainland hospitals. The District currently boasts a Class 6 ISO rating for residential properties—the best rating in San Juan County.

Because of its remoteness, the District has equipped and staffed itself to stand alone on emergency responses. Mutual aid is a minimum of two hours away. Major response issues include a lack of water hydrants and water, along with steep roads and narrow driveways. Access is a challenge for both EMS and fire. Along with emergency transport via fixed-wing plane or helicopter, marine evacuations are available.



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Due to the topography, there are seven stations across the island. The Eastsound station is staffed 24/7 by a Paramedic with additional overnight accommodations for three volunteers. Each station has a Class "A" pumper; one station has a 2,000 gallon tender, and two stations have 2,600 gallon tenders. Headquarters has two ALS equipped ambulances, one brush truck, and a light duty rescue. The age of the apparatus ranges from 1977 to 2009.

Two new pumpers, four WASP engines, two new tenders, one rescue, and one ambulance were purchased as part of the last strategic plan. The budget for 2016 reflects revenue of \$2.24 million, an operating budget of \$2.14 million, and a reserve fund of \$1.01 million.

The Fire Chief currently manages twelve full-time employees and 70 Fire and/or EMS volunteers in the Department.



## POSITION REQUIREMENTS:

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- A Bachelor's Degree from an accredited university or college in Fire Administration, Public Administration, or related field, or equivalency; or completion of the National Fire Academy's "Executive Fire Officer" program ("EFO") or equivalency
- Strong EMS background and certified to at least the WA State or National Register EMT
- Substantial experience participating in ICS situations
- Training program management
- Emergency disaster planning and Wildland interface firefighting
- Valid Driver's License and driving record free of significant violations
- EVDT certification within a reasonable amount of time
- Pass District's medical requirements and a thorough background check



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## The Location



Access to Orcas Island is by Washington State Ferry, float plane service from Seattle or other small aeronautical services from Seattle and Bellingham. There is no land link. Orcas Island has a diverse and self-reliant population that is generally highly educated and involved in the numerous activities on the island. There is one weekly newspaper, an on-line version of this paper, and an on-line blog. A wide assortment of entertainment, educational, and artistic opportunities is available, including a community theater and a nationally acclaimed Chamber Music Festival.

An accredited public school is available K through 12; private schools include Orcas Christian School, and several small private schools. Home schooling is another alternative authorized by local families with the support of the public school district. A variety of religions are observed on the island. Quality medical care is provided by both traditional and alternative practitioners.

Orcas Island is a major tourist destination because of its rural nature and environmental beauty. The climate is moderate, and because the island is in the rain shadow of the Olympic Mountains, it is shielded from the higher rainfall amounts encountered further south along the Washington coast. For those with outdoor interests, there is fishing, boating, camping, hiking, and sea kayaking. Moran State Park encompasses a major portion of the eastern side of the island and provides further hiking and camping opportunities. For the right individual who understands the demands of island living, Orcas Island is a very desirable place in which to reside.



More information about Orcas Island Fire and Rescue is available on our website: [www.orcasfire.org](http://www.orcasfire.org).