

CRR Plan

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Message From the Fire Chief

Protecting our community extends far beyond responding when emergencies occur. The Bellevue Fire Department is committed to reducing risk before tragedy strikes by partnering with residents, businesses, and community organizations to make Bellevue and the surrounding area a safer place to live, work, and visit.

Our Community Risk Assessment provides valuable insight into the hazards that have the greatest impact on our community. Through careful analysis of local data and trends, we have identified two key areas where focused prevention efforts can make a meaningful difference over the coming years: preventable false fire alarms and falls.

False fire alarms consume valuable emergency resources, interrupt critical services, and can delay responses to genuine emergencies elsewhere in the community. By working collaboratively with property owners, alarm companies, and building managers, we can improve system reliability, reduce unnecessary responses, and ensure our firefighters and equipment remain available for those who truly need them.

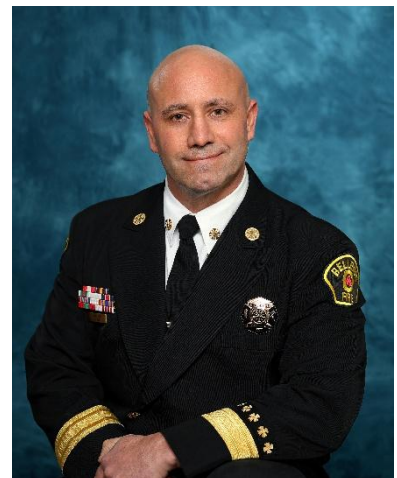
Falls, particularly among older adults, represent one of the leading causes of injury and emergency medical responses in our community. Many of these incidents are preventable through education, home safety improvements, physical activity, medication awareness, and partnerships with healthcare providers and community organizations. By investing in fall prevention today, we can help our residents maintain their independence and avoid life-changing injuries.

Community Risk Reduction is one of the most effective ways a modern fire department can serve its community. Success is measured not only by how quickly we respond to emergencies, but by how many emergencies we help prevent from occurring in the first place. Every avoided injury, every prevented fire, and every unnecessary alarm eliminated represents a positive outcome for our residents and a more resilient community.

The Bellevue Fire Department has a long journey ahead in the realm of Community Risk Reduction, but we are off to a great start. This plan reflects our commitment to using data-driven decision-making, strong partnerships, and proactive strategies to address the risks that matter most. Together, we can continue building a safer community for today and for generations to come.



Dave Tait
Fire Chief



Vision, Mission, and Values

Vision

The Bellevue Fire Department exists to serve the evolving needs of the community by protecting people, property, and the environment with courage, compassion, and commitment.

Mission

The Bellevue Fire Department exists to serve the evolving needs of the community by protecting people, property, and the environment with courage, compassion, and commitment.

The Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Team of the Bellevue Fire Department is dedicated to proactively reducing fire-related risks, building community health, enhancing public safety, and fostering resiliency within our community. Through outreach, education, and empowerment, we aim to engage residents, businesses, and visitors in the shared responsibility of creating a safer environment for all.

Values

Bellevue Fire embraces the City of Bellevue's Core Values of exceptional public service, stewardship, commitment to employees, integrity, innovation and diversity, equity and inclusion. We are committed to upholding and embodying them in our policies, culture, and daily actions.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

Our communities are vibrant, diverse, and growing. Understanding who we are helps us communicate, prepare, and respond so that everyone stays safe.



OUR COMMUNITIES AT A GLANCE

COMMUNITY	POPULATION	FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS	SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH AT HOME (AGE 5+)	POPULATION AGED 65+
BEAUX ARTS VILLAGE	~230	17.6%	14.7%	21.5%
BELLEVUE	~152,000	43.5%	48.8%	14.9%
CLYDE HILL	~3,100	35.7%	35.9%	22.9%
HUNTS POINT	~290	21.1%	21.2%	37.4%
MEDINA	~2900	32.7%	29.2%	18.6%
NEWCASTLE	~13,000	32.8%	41.9%	15.8%
YARROW POINT	~1200	27.3%	32.8%	19.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2020-2024 5-Year Estimates

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR OUR REGION



Nearly 1 in 2 Bellevue residents speak a language other than English at home.



More than 1 in 3 residents in Bellevue and Newcastle are immigrants, bringing rich cultures and perspectives.



Limited English proficiency is highest in Bellevue, so clear, translated communication is essential.



Diversity is our strength. Inclusive planning helps us reach and protect everyone.

OUR COMMUNITIES SPEAK MANY LANGUAGES

Top non-English languages spoken at home (Age 5+)

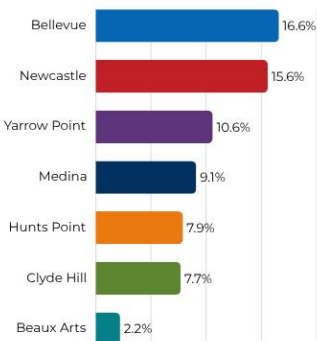
Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year (2020-2024) Estimates Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) estimates for the Greater Bellevue Area

	Chinese (Mandarin) - 18,736
	Spanish - 7,180
	Hindi - 6,307
	Korean - 4,391
	Telugu - 3,518
	Japanese - 3,423
	Russian - 3,000

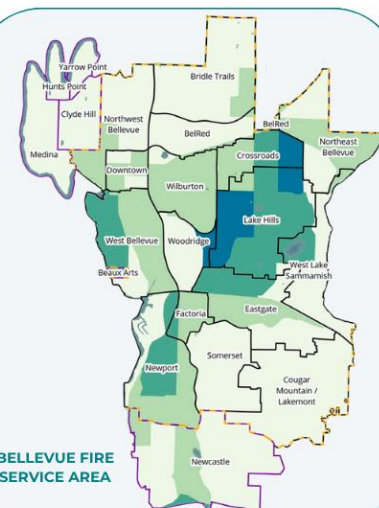
LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP)

Report speaking English less than "very well"

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2020-2024 5-Year Estimates



i Language diversity enriches our communities. Accurate, culturally appropriate communication helps ensure everyone gets the information they need in a crisis.



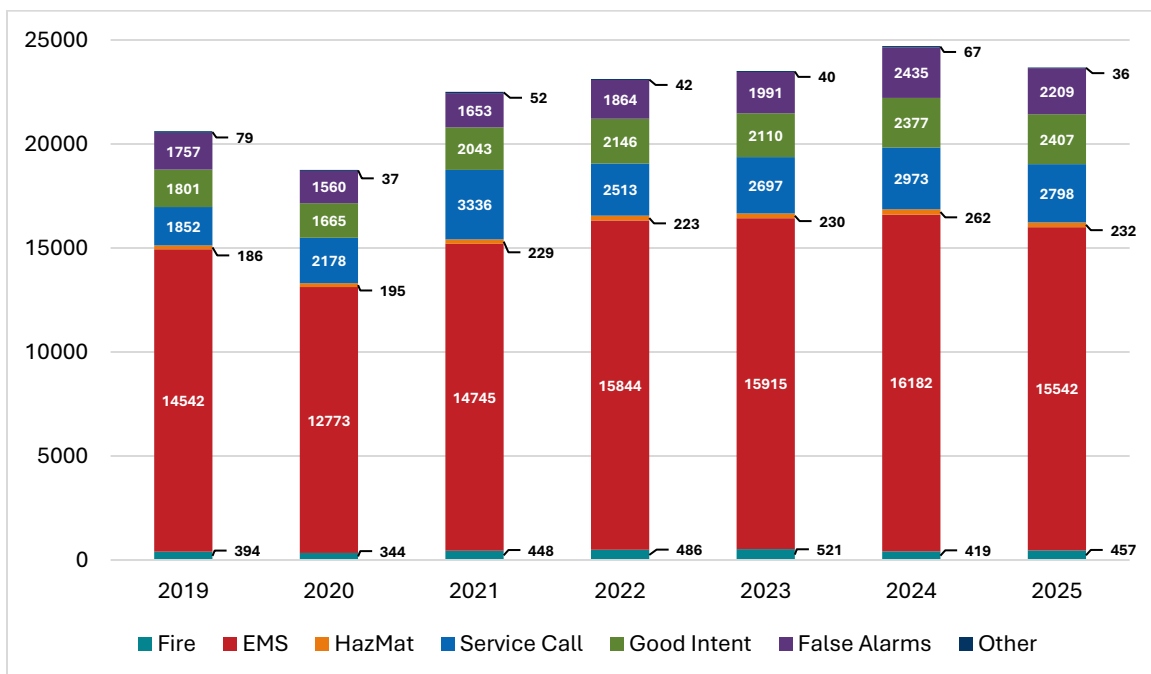
BELLEVUE FIRE SERVICE AREA

Department Overview

The Bellevue Fire Department is a fully career all-hazards department established in 1965. Today the department serves the City of Bellevue and contract cities Beaux Arts, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Medina, Newcastle, and Yarrow Point and consists of the Operations Bureau, the Support Services Bureau, the Fire Prevention Division, and the Office of Emergency Management.

Emergency services include fire suppression, basic and advanced life support, emergency medical transport, hazardous materials mitigation, water rescue and technical rescue operations encompassing confined space, rope rescue, trench rescue, heavy machinery rescue, auto extrication, and structural collapse response. Complementing these emergency services, the department also delivers numerous non-emergency services vital to community safety. These include fire prevention and code enforcement activities, routine fire safety inspections of commercial and multi-family residential properties, plan reviews for new construction projects, public education and community outreach initiatives, fire investigation services, emergency management and disaster preparedness planning and CPR and first aid training for community members. For community members needing assistance beyond emergency services, the Community Advocates for Referral and Education Services (CARES) Team can provide access to appropriate resources through a referral process from first responders.

Each year the total number of incidents increases, except for 2020 when the Covid-19 pandemic caused long term shutdowns of many workplaces. Most incidents are Emergency Medical Services (EMS), accounting for 65% of total incidents. Despite fire incidents representing only 2% of incidents in 2024 they represent one of the greatest risks to the community due to the devastating impact a large fire can inflict.



Community Risk Reduction Overview

Community Risk Reduction (CRR)

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standard 1300, CRR is a process to identify and prioritize local risks, followed by the integrated and strategic investment of resources to reduce their occurrence and impact.

Community Risk Assessment (CRA)

NFPA 1300 defines a CRA as a comprehensive evaluation that identifies, prioritizes, and defines the risks that pertain to the overall community. While the Bellevue Fire Department has had a combined CRA/SOC (Standards of Cover) for many years, a comprehensive community focused CRA was completed in 2025 utilizing data from 2019-2024.

Community Risk Reduction Plan (CRRP)

This CRRP outlines the goals, programs, and resources needed to reduce the high priority risks identified by the CRA.

Community Risk Reduction utilizes the 5 Es as fundamental strategies to change behavior. Education seeks to teach, engineering attempts to change the environment through technology, economic incentives increase compliance through financial benefits or fines, enforcement utilizes code and legal authority, and emergency response mitigates harmful outcomes when all other options have not prevented an emergency.



Executive Summary

Bellevue Fire's Community Risk Reduction Team was restarted in 2025 after the Covid-19 pandemic and the reduction of many outreach programs. The CRR Team is interdisciplinary with members representing Fire Prevention, Data and Systems, CARES, the Office of Emergency Management, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Operations. These different perspectives and skillsets allow the team to utilize multiple data sources, plan and deliver effective programming, evaluate success across multiple factors and modify programs based on the evaluations.

In 2025, the CRR Team published a Community Risk Assessment (CRA) to analyze the most common and impactful risks across the Bellevue Fire service area. It combined community demographics, natural hazards and historical incident data from 2019-2024 to create a risk matrix of the most common and impactful events across fire, EMS, and special risk hazards. Due to their frequent nature senior slips and falls were identified as the highest priority. False alarms, building fires in multifamily structures, motor vehicle collisions, and overdoses were identified as the next highest priority.

Risk: False Alarms

Risk Statement: In 2024 2,166 of the 24,715 total incidents responded to by the Bellevue Fire Department were false alarms. These incidents increased by almost 40% between 2019-2024. The majority of false alarms each year were coded as “unintentional” while “malfunctioning” and “unidentified” alternated as the next most common between the years analyzed.

These responses put stress on emergency operations as they can tie up multiple units for a significant amount of time. It also produces alarm fatigue which decreases the likelihood of evacuation for residents.

Goal: Reduce the number of preventable false alarms, with specific focus on facilities with six or more false alarms in 2025.

Objectives:

- Standardize the definition and causes of a preventable alarm to increase consistency of identification
- Communicate changes to education requirements and fines to the community
- Increase education of behavioral-caused false alarms for residential complexes through presentations and educational outreach materials
- Decrease the timeline between false alarm and follow up from fire prevention
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the preventable alarm program

Strategies:

- 1. Update internal processes to ensure consistency and timeliness
 - Analyze past false alarms to clearly define what is preventable. Categorize these alarms into behavioral-caused, system-caused, and weather-caused alarms.
 - Train fire prevention officers and operations personnel on preventable alarm identification.
 - Maintain a weekly timeline of identification, aggregation, and distribution of information regarding false alarms to customers.
 - Maintain regulatory compliance and documentation related to fire alarm system maintenance, installation, and usage.
- 2. Create targeted educational awareness and outreach campaigns for preventable false alarms.
 - Develop educational materials focused on behavior-caused alarms to market toward residential complexes and businesses

- Communicate with property managers and business owners on the process to evaluate problems with system-caused alarms
- 3. Establish effective community collaborations to reduce the occurrences of false alarms.
 - Develop communication protocols between property management companies, fire protection systems companies and county agencies to improve coordination and reduce false alarm activations.
- 4. Review effectiveness of intervention strategies and adjust as needed.
 - Track and analyze number of reported false alarms, accuracy of the report, and all intervention attempts.

Internal Participants:

- Fire Prevention Division
- Data Analytics and Systems
- Community Risk Reduction
- Operations Bureau
- CARES

Strategic Partners:

- Property management companies
- Fire protection systems companies
- Businesses
- Residents
- Homeowners Associations

Resources Needed:

- Funding
 - Budget for translation and printing of educational materials.
- Educational Materials
 - Outreach materials such as flyers, brochures, and presentation content to raise awareness about the importance of preventing false alarms.
 - Translation of these materials into at least the top 7 languages spoken Bellevue Fire's jurisdiction. Additional translations may be necessary to reach community members frequently affected by false alarms.
- Training and Development
 - Internal training for consistent identification of false alarms across station jurisdictions

Measures:

- Reduction in total number of false alarms.
- Reduction in number of buildings or complexes with 6 or more false alarms per year
- Reduction in deficient and overdue systems recorded in The Compliance Engine

Projected Timeline:

- Implementation- 3 months
- Evaluation: 6-month initial evaluation, then annual evaluation

Risk: Falls

Risk Statement: Unintentional falls are a leading cause of injury-related 911 calls, emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and loss of independence for older adults. Bellevue Fire repeatedly responds to fall-related incidents, many of which are preventable through targeted screening, home safety modifications, medication review, strength/balance training, and caregiver education.

Goal: Reduce the number of falls and lift assists specifically focusing on populations age 65+

Objectives:

- Increase awareness of falls and fall prevention among adults age 65+ and their caregivers.
- Improve access to resources and services aimed at reducing fall risks.
- Strengthen community partnerships between adult living facility staff, county resources, and non-profit community groups.
- Track fall data through ESO, CARES referrals and King County Fall Prevention to quantify fall reduction and identify gaps in service.

Strategies:

- 1. Identify community partners and target population groups within Bellevue
 - Create and maintain list of adult living facilities (whether skilled or independent living) and useful contacts for them
 - From this list, identify high utilizers of 9-1-1 for falls and lift assists
 - Reach out to community partners already working in fall prevention to understand their efforts and learn which gaps can be filled.
- 2. Create educational materials targeted toward 65+ population and their caretakers
 - Comprehensive resource guide including self-assessment, home assessment, common risks, and additional resources offered throughout the area.
 - Separate fall prevention presentations for 65+ audience and their caretakers.
- 3. Use EMS data to identify hotspots and frequent fallers. Map social determinants to target outreach.

Internal Participants:

- Community Risk Reduction
- Data Analytics and Systems
- CARES Team
- Operations Bureau
- EMS Division

Strategic Partners:

- King County Health Fall Prevention (One Step Ahead)
- Adult Living Facilities (residents and staff)
- Local Medical Providers
- Medical Equipment Vendors and Non-Profits
- Faith-Based and Civic Organizations

Resources Needed:

- Funding
 - Translation and printing of educational materials.
 - Prevention tools such as night lights and grip socks.
- Educational Materials
 - Outreach materials such as flyers, brochures, and presentation content to raise awareness about the impact of falls and methods of fall prevention.
 - Translation of these materials into at least the top 7 languages spoken Bellevue Fire's jurisdiction. Additional translations may be necessary to reach community members frequently affected by falls.
- Communication and Marketing
 - PIO directed series for aging population
 - Printed materials
 - Online tools such as newsletters, web, and social media
- Community Collaborations
 - Collaborate with local healthcare providers, adult living facilities, fitness facilities, government agencies and community-based organizations to leverage their expertise, resources, and outreach channels.

Measures:

- Fall Incidence and Injury Rates
 - Monitor the number of falls reported in 65+ population before, during, and after program implementation. Summarized by geography, sex, gender, race, and ethnicity.
- Program Participation and Reach
 - Track the number of older adults who participate in fall prevention programs
 - Monitor demographic information to ensure that programs are reaching target populations effectively.

Projected Timeline:

- Implementation- 3 months
- Evaluation: 6-month initial evaluation, then annual evaluation

Acknowledgements

Community Risk Reduction Team:

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Fire Chief Dave Tait