HOW DO WE MEASURE PUBLIC SAFETY?

Staffing and funding Police and Fire/EMS helps the City to best provide service and timely responses in times of emergency. Measuring the outcomes of response times and rates of fires contained to the area of origin are proxy measures of good performance.

The faster emergency services can reach the site of an emergency, the higher the likelihood of a successful outcome. Factors that affect response times include the distances between station and the incident, geographical barriers, and traffic. Having adequate Police staffing allows for the department to have timely responses to emergencies and non-emergencies alike. Adequate police staffing provides not only a measure of security and safety for the public, but also for the officers themselves.

Measures from the community survey provide standard indicators of how residents feel about public safety and how well they are prepared for emergencies. Having smoke detectors and being prepared for a three-day emergency will help to keep residents safe in the future, while measuring feelings of safety walking in neighborhoods shows how safe the city is now. Residents continue to comment that they are satisfied with the police presence and response times.
**HOW ARE WE DOING?**

“The mission of the Kirkland Police Department is to protect and serve our community with honor, integrity and courage,” which the department continues to do with a high level of service. Fire and Police respond around the clock with trained, equipped and operationally ready personnel whether a minor injury or a complex, life-threatening event. A minimum of 20 Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technicians are available to respond from five fire stations strategically positioned throughout our community to the wide variety of emergencies that occur in our community. 9-1-1 calls for emergency medical services (EMS) account for over 75% of emergency responses.

Kirkland Firefighter/EMTs manage the treatment and transport of patients with Basic Life Support (BLS) needs. Patients with more severe injuries or illnesses, or those requiring Advance Life Support (ALS) may require the support of paramedics from a neighboring agency, which is provided by formal mutual aid agreements with regional public safety partners.

The rapid growth of the City of Kirkland presents numerous challenges and training opportunities for our departments. Novel building design, along with new construction materials and methods, and increasing population density have required our training staff to expand our training curriculum and delivery methods. Kirkland’s City Council has been enormously supportive of these efforts by approving funding for initiatives that support the department’s evolving training needs. We continue to work with our regional partners to fully implement a sophisticated learning management system that will improve the quality of online training and documentation.

**WHAT ARE WE DOING?**

The Kirkland Police Department is always looking for ways to provide efficient and effective service to the residents. To further this, the City implemented the Police Strategic Plan, which was developed in tandem with our community stakeholders in 2017. It prioritizes community-based policing utilizing high visibility strategies to reduce crime and maintain a high level of confidence in public safety including a strong emphasis on community engagement. It also detailed a work plan and timeline for system and process improvements to include a more proactive patrol model.

In the November 2018 general election, Kirkland voters passed the Enhanced Police Services and Community Safety Ballot Measure (Proposition 1). This enabled the City to implement a 0.1 percent sales tax increase which funds the hiring of nine officers, including school and neighborhood resource officers, a five member ProAct Unit, homelessness services, behavioral health, gun safety, and education programs. For additional information about the City’s ongoing implementation efforts [https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Residents/Public_Safety.htm](https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Residents/Public_Safety.htm)

The Fire Department is a highly trained and well-equipped organization, with the protection of resident’s lives, property and the environment as its focus. Emergency response, fire prevention, emergency management, fire code and policy implementation and education are all supported by extensive training to protect Kirkland’s residents, visitors, and businesses.

Looking forward in emergency management, staff also train and coordinate several community volunteer programs, including the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Map Your Neighborhood (MYN), and the Kirkland Emergency Communications Team (KECT). To maintain the current standard of service in the future, a Fire Strategic Plan was completed in 2018 to recommend necessary updates and expansion which includes:

- Site acquisition and preliminary planning for the new Station 24, with construction scheduled to begin in 2020
- Identification of a potential location for a new Station 27 located on NE 132nd Street east of Interstate 405 and just north of Evergreen Hospital.
- Completion of renovations at Station 25 on Finn Hill.
- The department’s Office of Emergency Management (OEM) continued to focus on providing training and support to City of Kirkland staff and volunteers.
- Fire Prevention personnel implemented a new software system to support field inspections.

2018 was the first year of the Kirkland Police Department Animal Services Program. Previously these services were provided by Regional Animal Services of King County (RASCK). The new local service is funded using funds collected from animal services through pet licensing and included a new dedicated Animal Control Officer (ACO) to provide a greater level of local awareness and community awareness. The Department was confident that the service provided would continue to be more immediate and full service.

Animal Control Officer Jennifer Matison was hired to build the program that began on January 1, 2018. Like many local Animal Control programs, the Animal Control Officer is part of the Kirkland Police Department. In her first full year of the program, there has been a significant decrease in sheltering costs. ACO Matison has responded to 828 Animal calls for service, reunited 49 pets with their owners and attended 58 community events and meetings in order to provide education about pet licensing and domestic animal concerns.