

Prevention, Education, Communications, & Outreach

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Dear Family,

May is Wildfire Awareness Month, and today, your child learned all about wildfires. The three big points of today's lesson were what (what do we need to know about wildfires), why (why do we need to plan for emergencies such as wildfires), and how (how can we be prepared and stay safe). We discussed wildfires as a big topic and what it means for our local community, including being prepared by joining people worldwide on May 4th for Wildfire Preparedness Day. While there are many things around a home and property that children cannot do, we worked to empower them to participate within their scope of ability. Some ideas shared with them are to help with yardwork clearing debris, create and practice the evacuation route from your home, and help put together an emergency "Go Kit" with the whole family.

Wildfires can happen anywhere, anytime. Wildfires can start from natural causes, such as lightning, but most (nearly 90%) are caused by humans. Once a wildfire begins burning, it can move at an average of 14 miles per hour; wildfires in the United States burn around 5-10 million acres annually. The chance of wildfires happening is higher when there is little or no rainfall. This makes bushes, grass, and trees dry and easier to burn. High winds can spread wildfires. We see a significant increase here in Washington as the weather warms up and we approach the summer months. This is why May is a perfect month to begin proactive steps in prevention and preparedness.

The lesson, materials, and activities were provided to our school courtesy of the certificated educators from Central Pierce Fire & Rescue and Graham Fire & Rescue. All the information was sourced from FEMA, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the U.S. Forest Service (Smokey Bear), and Britannica Kids. For more information regarding this topic, they encourage you to visit their websites or reach out directly using the information at the top of the page.

With gratitude from your local fire departments,



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