

Chief DJ Evans

Kittitas County Fire District #1 (KCFD #1) has been under consistent change due to the leadership of the fire chief, DJ Evans. KCFD #1 protects 43 square miles which includes 10 miles of Interstate 90, 12 miles of Highway 10, 8 miles of Highway 97, Burlington Rail Road, and provides water rescue along with the Sheriff's department. Evans love for firefighting started at a young age.

Evans volunteered for KCFD #1 during high school in 1968-1970. During this time, the high school students who volunteered played a major role at the fire department because they were the ones to receive the calls and the first to respond to a fire. Once Evans graduated from Thorp High School he ventured out of the county working in the Spokane area for several years. Evans then decided to work for North American Van Lines that was based out of Cheyenne WY. He drove from coast to coast moving people.

After working for North American Van Lines for approximately four years, Evans decided to come back to his hometown, Thorp. He started working on the Rocky Mountain Heart K Ranch as the Ranch Manager. In 1996, Evans rejoined the KCFD #1 as a volunteer. That same year he married his wife Kay, who joined the fire department in 1998. Evans became a training officer in January of 2000, soon moving up to Assistant Chief in May of 2001, followed by becoming Chief in July of 2001. In the last six years KCFD #1 has changed remarkably.

In 2000 KCFD#1 built a brand new station in Thorp which now houses a new Class A structure engine and a mini pumper. The station doubled in size in 2005 which allowed the district to house a new tender, ambulance, and two brush trucks. Small grants that Evans has acquired, has helped buy new equipment to replace outdated equipment. Evans has also made it possible for volunteers to train heavily with other districts, which has allowed district one to work closely with Districts 2, 6, 7, 8, the City of Kittitas, City of Cle Elum, and South Cle Elum. In 2004, Districts 1, 7 and 8 joined together in an operational consolidation becoming Kittitas County Fire and Rescue. KCFD #1 received an ambulance from Upper County Life Support and has certified nine EMT 's in 2004.

Evans has also created a Junior Firefighting program for High School students. Together Kay and DJ have worked with Thorp Schools to create a Fire Prevention Week program for local students. KCFD #1 also hosts events such as Fall Celebration, Community Christmas, and an Easter Egg Hunt as community service projects.

KCFD #1 facilities have been a meeting place for other organizations such as Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Water District #4, local 4H club and Kittitas County Coalition (civic organization).