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## Whatcom County Fire District #11



Neighborhoods that are prepared for emergencies and disaster situations save lives, reduce the severity of injuries and trauma, and reduce property damage.

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### Inter-Island Emergency Communication Network

(formerly known as MURS - Island Intercom)

The Inter-Island Emergency Communication Network (Network) is a limited back up communications system of approximately 30 stations that can connect parts of the Island to the Fire Station when all other communication systems are overwhelmed or fail. These stations, operated by local volunteers, become the eyes and ears for our first responders during major emergencies or during extended, wide-spread outages of power and normal communications via telephone, internet and cell services.

Earlier this year an Island-wide Disaster Preparedness Leadership Team undertook an assignment to evaluate the Network and make recommendations for improvement. Interviews were conducted with over 20 Network operators as well as Island/County Emergency Officials. Overall results showed that The Network presently provides service for approximately 200 households and is considered a vital link to island safety. Future expansion is considered necessary as the island's full time population grows.

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Steps are currently underway to:

- Recruit MYN (Map Your Neighborhood) Leaders/Network Operators thereby expanding operations to include more island neighborhoods.
- Establish a Communications Technical Team to support station startups, produce user training aids and provide HAMS radio support that may be required as the Network continues to develop it's operations.
- Resurrect user call-in sessions to check equipment, identify connectivity issues, establish Call Relay procedures, and provide familiarity with radio equipment.
- Provide continued information to all islanders as to the growth and location of these Network Stations throughout Lummi Island.

We plan to keep you informed as our work proceeds, If you'd like to know more about the MYN Programs or the Network please contact one of us:

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## Smoke Sense Study: A Citizen Science Project Using a Mobile App

EPA researchers initiated a citizen science project called Smoke Sense. This project has two broad objectives. The first is to increase awareness of the known health effects associated with exposure to wildfire smoke. The second is to further advance the scientific understanding of that relationship, specifically to:

- Understand the subclinical health impacts of wildland fire smoke
- Discover how people protect their health during smoke exposure
- Develop effective strategies to communicate health risks from smoke exposure

Individuals who want to contribute to science can participate in the study by using the Smoke Sense app, a free mobile application on the Google Play™ Store and the Apple App™ Store. Smoke Sense is available in both English and Spanish. Smoke Sense app users participate anonymously and their identities are not captured.

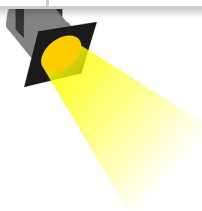
The study is the first of its kind known to use a mobile application to evaluate health effects from wildland fires experienced by those who participate, and to test whether health risks can be communicated effectively through resources and engagement delivered with the app.

Click [here](#) to watch a video about the EPA Smoke Sense Project.

Click [here](#) to read a research article in the GEOHealth Journal



**Smoke Sense**



## Air Quality During Wildfire Season

If there is an active fire in your area, or if the Air Quality Index indicates smoke levels are unhealthy and forecasted to remain there, local authorities may advise you to stay indoors or create a clean room rather than evacuate. Setting up a clean room at home can help reduce your exposure to dangerous or unhealthy wildfire smoke while indoors.

Conditions can change quickly, so you should always be prepared to evacuate if necessary. Follow your local news or the EPA's [AirNow](#) website.

Everyone can benefit from spending time in a clean room during a wildfire, but it may be most helpful for sensitive individuals like the very young, very old, and people with heart or lung problems.

Learn more about the [health effects of wildfire smoke](#).

### How Do I Set Up a Clean Room at Home?

1. Choose a room. It should be big enough to fit everyone in your household and comfortable to spend time in. A bedroom with an attached bathroom is a good choice.
2. Prevent smoke from entering the room. Close windows and doors in the room, but don't do anything that makes it hard to get out. If there is an exhaust fan or range hood in the clean room space, only use it for short periods.
3. Stay cool. Run fans, window air conditioners, or central air conditioning. If your HVAC system or window air conditioner has a fresh air option, turn it off or close the intake.
4. Filter the air in the room. Use a portable air cleaner that is the right size for the room. Run the portable air cleaner continuously on the highest fan setting if you can. Click [here](#) for a video on creating an inexpensive box fan filter.
5. If you have central HVAC, you can also install a high-efficiency filter (MERV 13 or higher) in the system. Run the system's fan as often as possible to get the most out of the filter.
6. Avoid activities that create smoke or other particles indoors, including:
  - Smoking cigarettes, pipes, and cigars.
  - Using gas, propane or wood-burning stoves and furnaces.
  - Spraying aerosol products.
  - Frying or broiling food.
  - Burning candles or incense.
  - Vacuuming, unless you use a vacuum with a HEPA filter.
7. Dust or mop surfaces in the clean room with a damp cloth as needed to keep settled particles from getting back into the air.
8. Spend as much time as possible in the clean room to get the most benefit from it. Avoid exercising while in the clean room

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## Map Your Neighborhood (MYN) News

Map Your Neighborhood provides a simple plan to help residents and their neighbors during the important first hours after a disaster until emergency services can reach them. While MYN was a result of physical disasters (hurricane, flood, earthquake) it is an excellent program for ANY disruption in our daily lives such as the current pandemic.

**We are still looking for volunteers to form small MYN groups for the following areas:**

**North End:** Legoe Bay..

**Scenic Estates:** Beach Avenue, Jamison Road, Hales Passage, Dogwood Terrace, Rosewood Terrace, Scenic Avenue, Dana Circle / Island Drive.

If you know of someone who might be willing to take on a MYN Lead role in one of the above areas, please let us know.



**for volunteering to make your neighborhood a safer place!**

MYN Co-Leads  
Leslie Dempsey & Joan Moye

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## Public Alert Sign-up

Whenever a significant incident occurs in Whatcom County, Whatcom Unified Emergency Management (WUEM) uses various methods to notify the media and the public. One of those methods is a messaging system called **AlertSense** provided by MyStateUSA. AlertSense allows WUEM to send a message to an email address, as a text message to a phone, and/or as a voice message to a phone. Click on this phone image to sign up.



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### Resources:

[Lummi Island Survival In Isolation Brochure](#)

[Public Alert Sign-up](#)

[Lummi Island Tsunami Evacuation Brochure](#)

[WA Emergency Management Emergency Preparedness Guide](#)

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<https://www.lummiislandfire.com>

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